The 21st Century Senzala: The (de)Construction of Space in Brazil's Domestic Work Industry

Research Thesis

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by

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Chapter I: Introduction

Spatial gap in Brazilian domestic work

Despite the depth of economic and social research concerning several different modalities of employment and workers' rights, there is a sector of workers greatly underrepresented in academic studies, but widely recognized in popular conceptions: domestic workers. In Latin America and the Caribbean, domestic work represents 20% of the female working population (Pereira de Melo, 1998). In Brazil alone, there are an estimated 7.2 million individuals who are employed as domestic workers, 93% of which are women and 61.6% of which are Black (Pinho, 2015). This overrepresentation of Black women in the domestic work industry is deeply tied to the country's historic forms of racism and enslavement. During the colonial period in Brazil, enslaved African and Afro-descendant people were charged with maintaining the homes of their enslavers and carrying out all domestic chores. In fact, in 1870, it is estimated that enslaved women working in the home constituted 71% of the female workforce in Rio de Janeiro (Roncador, 2007). However, even following the abolition of slavery in 1888 with the proclamation of the Lei Aurea, the practice continued largely unaffected. As Brown (2006) affirms, "even after its official abolition, master-slave arrangements continued as before" (p. 79). Roncador (2007) argues that the casa grande (master's home) and senzala (slave quarters) did not disappear, but changed forms in the post-abolition period, as liberated Afro-descendants traded the senzala for slums and the racial dichotomy of the colonial period became further ingrained in in the Brazilian imaginary.

In recent history, the condition of domestic workers in the country continues to bear the historical burden of these ongoing forms of oppression. For instance, the landmark piece of labor reform that arose in the mid-20th century (the Consolidação de Leis Trabalhistas, CLT) did not

include domestic service within its legislative reach because it considered this "non-economic" work (Pinho, 2015). As Pinho (2015) describes, "by excluding domestic workers from its benefits, Brazilian legislators maintained the status quo of millions of poor (and mainly black) women, thus contributing to further naturalizing their position as 'less than' laborers" (p. 107). There have been further gains in the 21st century, including the passage of the PEC das Domésticas, a constitutional amendment which extended all of the protections under the CLT to these workers (Roberts, 2019). Nonetheless, in addition to the factor that legal regulation of this sector continues to be incredibly difficult to enforce, the extensive history of discrimination in the field has created an even more durable cultural impact. As Pereira de Melo (1998) explains, "in the memories of our childhoods, the stereotype of nannies and cooks is of Black and mixed women" (p. 332). A wide variety of scholars have aimed to address the racialized, gendered, and classist cultural understanding and representation of domestic workers in Brazil, including television portrayals such as Pereira Grijó and Freire Sousa (2012), literary representation around the turn of the 20th century such as Roncador (2007), and social media testimonies of domestic workers such as Muniz (2016).

Markedly, less work has employed a geographic approach to understanding hegemonic conceptions of domestic workers in Brazil. Although most works address geographic questions to some extent, given the difficulty in discussing domestic work without referencing important spaces (such as the home and the maid's quarters), Bragança et al. (2019) seems to be the only work that explicitly focuses on spatial questions when analyzing representations of domestic workers, as it aims to map geographies of domestic workers portrayed in two prominent Brazilian films. I will expand upon this understanding of these geographies in this work. Specifically, I will aim to respond to the following research questions throughout this thesis:

1. How do racial, class, and gendered stereotypes about domestic workers impact the imaginary understanding of the spaces they occupy? In other words, what types of spatial imaginaries are constructed around domestic workers?
2. How are private and public spaces constructed, shaped, and policed with relation to domestic workers? What are the effects of such practices?

My work will build upon and complement the current literature by addressing such spatial questions, employing a large body of recent (and largely unanalyzed) case studies, and applying a unique geographic theoretical framework. In doing so, I will underscore the need to understand domestic work as a discursive and practiced construct that is both produced by and productive of spaces throughout the Brazilian landscape.

Methodology

In order to address these questions, I selected a sample of case studies that would speak to recent representations of domestic workers (all case studies range in publication from 2014 to 2021) and that would provide varied forms of representation (two films, two series of comic strips, one book of testimonies, and a series of news headlines). Firstly, I analyzed the film *Que horas ela volta?,* directed by Anna Muylaert, which follows the story of Val, a domestic worker who left her native Pernambuco to earn a living in São Paulo, in order to support her daughter (who stayed behind in Pernambuco with a family friend). Val has lived with her upper-class employers Bárbara and Carlos for several years now, and she has essentially raised their son Fabinho. The plot of the film follows the conflicts that ensue when her daughter Jéssica decides to come stay with the family for a short period of time, while she studies for and takes the entrance exam for a university in São Paulo. The disconnect between Val and Jéssica, as well as Jéssica's unawareness of the rules that dictate the lives of domestic workers, generate tension

and conflicts within the family (Muylaert, 2015). Second, I analyzed the film *Casa Grande*, directed by Fellipe Gamarano Barbosa, which documents the coming-of-age of an upper-class teenager named Jean, whose family employs an extensive staff of domestic workers. At the same time that Jean's family experiences increasing financial troubles, he struggles to express his sexuality, focusing in particular on the family's domestic worker Rita (Barbosa, 2014). Third, I included select comic strips from two series: Confinada (which follows the satirized struggles of an upper-class woman while in quarantine during the COVID-19 pandemic), developed by Leandro Assis and Priscila Oliveira, and Os Santos (which follows the private conversations of an upper-class family as they interact with their domestic workers and aim to make sense of the social landscape that they perceive in Brazil), developed solely by Assis. Fourth, I analyzed a series of testimonies from domestic workers themselves, presented in the book *Eu, empregada doméstica*. The editor of the book, Preta Rara, initially began the project as a Facebook page, where she accepted submissions from other domestic workers concerning the discrimination and inhumane conditions they faced on the job. Because of the success and popularity of the Facebook page, which had expanded to encompass testimonies from family members of domestic workers, employers of domestic workers, or anyone who had been touched by domestic work in their lives, Preta Rara compiled a selection of these testimonies into the book. Finally, I included a couple of news headlines that gained popularity in Brazil during this period related to domestic workers. In the next section, I will address the theoretical framework that I developed to use these case studies to respond to my research questions.

Theoretical approach: commonsense and dialectical production of space

At this point, I would like to introduce my positionality, as it played a decisive role in the way I approached this piece from a theoretical standpoint. I am a white, gay, cisgender male

college student from the United States (specifically from the state of Ohio). My interest in the subject of domestic work emerged because of my mother's experience being the child of a family with a Black domestic worker, who, for all intents and purposes, raised my mother. Growing up, my mother constantly reminisced on what an impact Eula had on her life, considering she passed away before I was born, and I never had the chance to meet her. Since then, I have been fascinated by the power dynamics in these racial, class, and gender relations, especially as they are intertwined with affective connections of intimacy and proximity. Thus, when I ventured to Brazil for the first time and found that it is estimated to have the highest population of domestic workers of any country in the world, I found myself wanting to dive deeper into the issue. However, in many instances, people who have exposure to both Brazil and the United States fall into the trap of drawing rather problematic comparisons and conclusions about the trajectories of the two nations. Many have used the explicit forms of institutional racism in the US, such as Jim Crow Laws, to argue that Brazil faces less racism or has an easier path ahead in terms of eradicating racism as compared to its North American counterpart. On the other hand, rather than emphasizing the institutionalized nature of US racism, some end up launching teleological arguments that place the United States ahead of Brazil in terms of abstract and poorly defined terms such as racial progress or democracy.

For this reason, I have aimed to rely primarily on the work of Brazilian (and, where possible, Afro-Brazilian) scholars to set the basis for my argument. I, of course, recognize that this alone is not sufficient to limit the extent to which I project my own biases on the situation in Brazil. However, by engaging more and more with thinkers outside of a US-centric norm, I find myself challenging the assumptions that I once brought to the table. The use of these works is not necessarily meant to help me escape this US-centric norm entirely, but rather to help me better

identify when it is guiding my thought process and argumentation and to imagine forms of existence independent of this norm. In this sense, this theoretical approach (and this project as a whole) represents a step in the constant process I must engage in to deconstruct the notions of class, gender, race, and ethnocentrism I have learned.

The primary theoretical framework that will set the basis for my argument was developed by Patricia Pinho, a scholar of race in Brazil. In her piece, "The Dirty Body that Cleans: Representations of Domestic Workers in Brazilian Common Sense", Pinho (2015) proposes a model consisting of three tenets of Brazilian cultural politics that naturalize the confinement of domestic workers to their particular status in society:

> "the pervasive authoritarianism that is directed mainly at the poor; the contempt for manual labor and the constant ridicule of manual workers' alleged inferiority; and the repulsion for the black body, frequently portrayed as hyper-resistant and infra-human." (p. 103)

In this piece, I will confirm Pinho's findings by illustrating how each of these three tenets—authoritarianism, contempt for manual labor, and dehumanization of the Black body—are recurring themes throughout the case studies that I analyze. In order to do so, I will also rely on the concept of "commonsense" as explained by Antonio Gramsci. According to Gramsci (1932/2000), commonsense refers to the common beliefs and uncritical thought that dominates a society. Considering that "cultural representations do not merely reflect but rather constitute reality" (Pinho, 2015, p. 104), engaging with Brazilian commonsense presents a unique opportunity to toggle between the world of practices and embodied experiences and the world of discursive representations. In other words, both practice and discourse are indicative of these uncritical beliefs.

In addition to confirming Pinho's findings about the constitutive parts of Brazilian commonsense as it relates to domestic workers, I will argue that this commonsense is constructed and produced spatially. In order to so, I will rely principally on the Afro-Brazilian geographer Milton Santos' understanding of space and the production of space. Santos (1978) defines space as a series of forms that represent past and present social relations, which is constantly shaped by changing relations. In particular, he highlights how "space is a true force field whose formation is unequal", as it is aims to include and provide for some, while excluding and depriving others (Santos, 1978, p. 122). In other words, space reflects the underlying uneven social relations in a society. At the same time, Santos (1978) argues that space not only is produced by social relations, but also a social factor in and of itself, meaning it shapes these social relations. Combining these two insights, Santos (1978) affirms that space is a "subordinated-subordinating structure" that is "the result of a collective praxis that reproduces social relations" (p. 171). He sees humanity and space as joined in a dialectic relationship.

Santos' conception of space provides a couple of useful insights for my project in particular. Firstly, he emphasizes the way in which space is produced not as a specific instance in time, but rather as a deeply historical process (Saquet & Santos da Silva, 2008). In order to understand the spaces that constitute the Brazilian imaginary around domestic workers, it is critical to highlight the historical roots (specifically the colonial roots) of these conceptions. Secondly, although Santos proposes a totalizing theory—meaning that he sees space as stemming from a singular, global logic—he does emphasize the relative autonomy and local expression of the production of space (Saquet & Santos da Silva, 2008). Following the Marxist turn in geography, which was rife with such totalizing theories, feminist geographers problematized these theories because of their failure to explain and account for forms of

oppression outside of economic factors, for instance (Derickson, 2009). Despite my hesitancy to engage with totalizing theories for this reason, Santos proposes a unique solution to this, by arguing that places are constituted by a dialectical interplay by global and local logics (Saquet & Santos da Silva, 2008). As such, his theory provides greater flexibility to be able to adapt to the specific race, gender, and class elements of spatial production in Brazil. Finally, I appreciate the way that Santos categorizes space, specifically referencing social space (corresponding to the reproduction of individuals, through life and work) and geographic space (corresponding to the space of the reproduction of society as a whole) (Saquet & Santos da Silva, 2008). In line with feminist thinking, these categories reject the traditional private-versus-public divide, which clearly holds little utility when discussing domestic work.

As such, my main goal is to demonstrate the way in which the three tenets of Brazilian commonsense defined by Pinho—authoritarianism, contempt for manual labor, and dehumanization of the Black body—represent the historical and current social relations that are both inscribed in space and constantly reconstituted by space. I will pull on examples of specific spaces represented or evidenced in the case studies that underscore these three components. My intention is not to engage in a functional exercise of segmenting the examples and designating them to a specific component of Brazilian commonsense. In other words, when I reference the maid's quarters in relation to authoritarianism, this is not to say that this same space does not also buttress the contempt for manual labor or the dehumanization of the Black body. Rather, as Pinho (2015) signals, all of these components are deeply intertwined and exist in dialogue with one another. In fact, throughout my argument, I will repeatedly reference the same spaces in different contexts in order to illustrate how they serve a series of tangled purposes for Brazilian commonsense. Moreover, throughout my thesis, I will engage with a series of other theoretical

concepts, including subjectivity, citizenship, and *lugar de fala*, but I will explain those as I go, as each of those concepts has a more specific and localized purpose in the argument. Once again, the vast majority of these concepts will be derived from works of Brazilianists and Afro-Brazilian scholars.

Chapter II: Authoritarian and paternalistic control of empregadas

In Brazilian domestic life, the notion of authoritarianism implies not only a hierarchical sense of domination, but also a tacit agreement built into this tutelage that creates a reciprocal sense of loyalty between the patrões and empregada. According to Pinho (2015), Brazilians expect poor and Black people to "know their place" (p. 107), meaning they demarcate spatial and mental divisions to distinguish themselves from the subjects of their authoritarianism. In fact, Pinho (2015) sites specific spatial constructions that signal this separation, including the quarto de empregada. Furthermore, she notes how empregadas are expected to respond to such domination with deference and obedience, making the relationship one of "reciprocal loyalty" (Pinho, 2015, p. 109). Whereas the empregada expresses her loyalty through discretion, affection, and gratitude, the patrões work to convey theirs through signs of benevolence and protection, which "serve to keep the class boundaries and the structure of domination very much in place" (Pinho, 2015, p. 109). In this way, patrões aim to maintain a paternalistic stronghold over their empregadas. However, this 'mutual' relationship is constantly negotiated and policed. Because this dynamic operates off the premise that each of these groups is defined by their place in this hierarchy, patrões actively surveil and test their empregadas to ensure that these acts of benevolence do not turn their deference into defiance (Pinho, 2015).

This understanding of authoritarianism in domestic work is key to reconciling the seeming conflicting aspects of affection and domination within these relations, which I will further unpack throughout the remainder of this section. However, I would like to underscore the ways in which space is both productive of and produced by this sense of authoritarianism. Pinho (2015) makes reference to several examples of how space is carefully constructed in order to maintain this tutelage, but in this section, I will expand upon this further to confirm her findings

and to argue that a dialectical sense of proximity and distance is spatially constructed between empregadas and patrões, which thus produces this paternalistic relationship. First, I will show how empregadas' migratory experiences often allow them to establish closer bonds with their patrões, as the same time that it subjects them to additional exploitation, due to their spatial removal from their families and social networks. Secondly, I will underscore that, within the home, a spatial imaginary of generosity is created, principally by means of the quartinho de empregada (maid's quarters). Patrões, however, weaponize this supposed benevolence to induce a sense of indebtedness out of their empregadas. Finally, I will illustrate how, despite the seemingly blurred lines of proximity and distance within the house, patrões engage in spatial policing in order to remind empregadas of their social distance while coexisting with upper-class, white families.

Displacement, migration, and mobility as forms of isolation

Throughout Brazilian popular culture, archetypes of the empregada figure abound, especially those rooted in specific regions. Geographic inequality has historically characterized the country since the colonial period. Since the abolition of slavery in 1888, income has become increasingly concentrated within the Southeastern and Southern regions, while the North and Northeast have not enjoyed such economic growth. Within these regions, similar income divides have historically existed between the more rural 'interior' zones and urban centers, often located along the coastline (Reis, 2014). Such uneven distributions have produced sustained forms of migrations throughout the country for years. Speaking specifically to the historical connections between slavery and domestic work in the post-abolition period, Muniz (2016) notes that

> the painful experience lived by enslaved and freed women made them distance themselves increasingly from the rural world to explore the urban centers in search of the

> long dreamed of liberty and mobility. Domestic service presented itself in this setting as a possible destination for black women, who were not absorbed by other sectors because of their color or gender. (p. 56)

The uneven distribution of economic resources and opportunities is certainly not exclusive to the domestic work industry. However, the logic underlying the hierarchical domination of empregadas relies on this socio-geographically differential access to resources. In order to embed these women into this neo-colonial structure, patrões either actively work to dispossess them or take advantage of their dispossession from spaces in which they enjoy autonomy and independence, often in these regions outside of the metropolitan centers.

For instance, in the film *Que horas ela volta?*, Val's ability to exemplify this role as the dutiful, loyal, and obedient servant is primarily predicated on her spatial detachment from her native Pernambuco and, therefore, her daughter Jéssica. As the title of the film indicates, much of the plot focuses on the conflict Val experiences, as the needs of attending to her daughter distance her from the duties and expectations of her patrões. The opening scene shows Val watching Fabinho (a toddler at the time) swim in the pool, while she speaks on the phone with Jéssica, telling her how much she misses her. As soon as Fabinho gets out of the pool and comes to talk to Val, however, she hangs up the call. Just as Jéssica was inquiring about her mother, Fabinho then asks Val what time his own mother will be home, to which she responds "sei não" [I don't know] and hugs him in a maternal embrace (Muylaert, 2015, 3:56). In other words, the displacement of Fabinho's mother Bárbara necessitated the displacement of another woman to take on this role. The subsequent affection and connection that Val and Fabinho share in their relationship, contrasted with the conflict and tension between Val and Jéssica, highlight how Val's distance from her own family allows her to commit to the needs of her patrões' family

more fully. In fact, years later, Val experiences an awkward moment with the diarista Edna, as the latter complains about how difficult it is to raise a child as a single mother, saying "É difícil criar o filho sozinha. Chegar à noite quero ver a carinha dando uma risada" [It's difficult to raise a child alone. Getting home at night, I want to see his face laughing] (Muylaert, 2015, 7:04-7:08). She then apologizes once upon realizing that she is speaking to someone who has been displaced from her daughter. That same night, while Edna is able to go home to her son, Val spends the night holding Fabinho, singing him to sleep. Subsequently, the relative autonomy that Edna enjoys—only working certain days of the week, not having to assume responsibility for all domestic tasks in the home—is tied with her status as a paulista (a native of São Paulo). Val, on the other hand, rarely sees to ever be 'off the clock', as she is expected to tend to the family as if it were her own. The disparities between these two characters affirms the function of geographic displacement in the broader functioning of patrões' subjugations of their empregadas.

Similarly, the displacement of empregadas from rural areas in the interior of their respective states function in the same manner to induce them into this authoritarian relationship in the absence of (or distance from) other support mechanisms, such as families and community connections. For instance, as one woman recalled from *Eu, empregada doméstica*:

> Sou de um município muito pobre no interior do RJ, e aos 4 anos fui tirada de casa por uma família que prometeu aos meus pais que eu iria estudar fazer pequenos serviços como tomar conta de outra criança. Ai começou o meu pesadelo eu trabalhava igual condenada mesmo sendo apenas uma criança. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [I am from a really poor city in the interior of Rio de Janeiro, and at 4 years old, I was taken from my home by a family who promised my parents that I would study and do

small services like taking care of the other child. That was where my nightmare started, I worked just like a prisoner, even just being a child.]

Several other testimonies affirmed that this is a common tactic among patrões: driving out to rural areas outside of their urban centers to search for an empregada, often seeking out underage women and convincing them and/or their parents that it would be an opportunity to study, make money, or escape poverty (Preta Rara, 2019). These lies serve as the basis for the construction of the myth of reciprocal loyalty; by offering such benevolence, families and empregadas are led to respond with similar good will. However, this physical separation creates difficulty in ensuring accountability, which allows this seemingly egalitarian exchange to become a hierarchical form of domination.

Even in instances in which the empregada is not deliberately recruited but rather chooses to migrate on her own terms, the precarity that she experiences both in her hometown and in urban centers allows the authoritarian terms of the agreement to seem like the only viable option to secure stability and protection. As Muniz (2016) explains in her exploration of the history of domestic work in Brazil, "these women opted for an uncertain, but independent future, and increasingly distant from the past of violations suffered in farms and plantations, even though, whether they knew it or not, their history of struggle for dignified living and working conditions had just begun" (p. 56). One woman, who had left her rural hometown in pursuit of a job as a faxineira and babá in the city, expressed her desire to leave after the first day when the exploitative litany of duties and rules of the house were presented to her. However, as she describes:

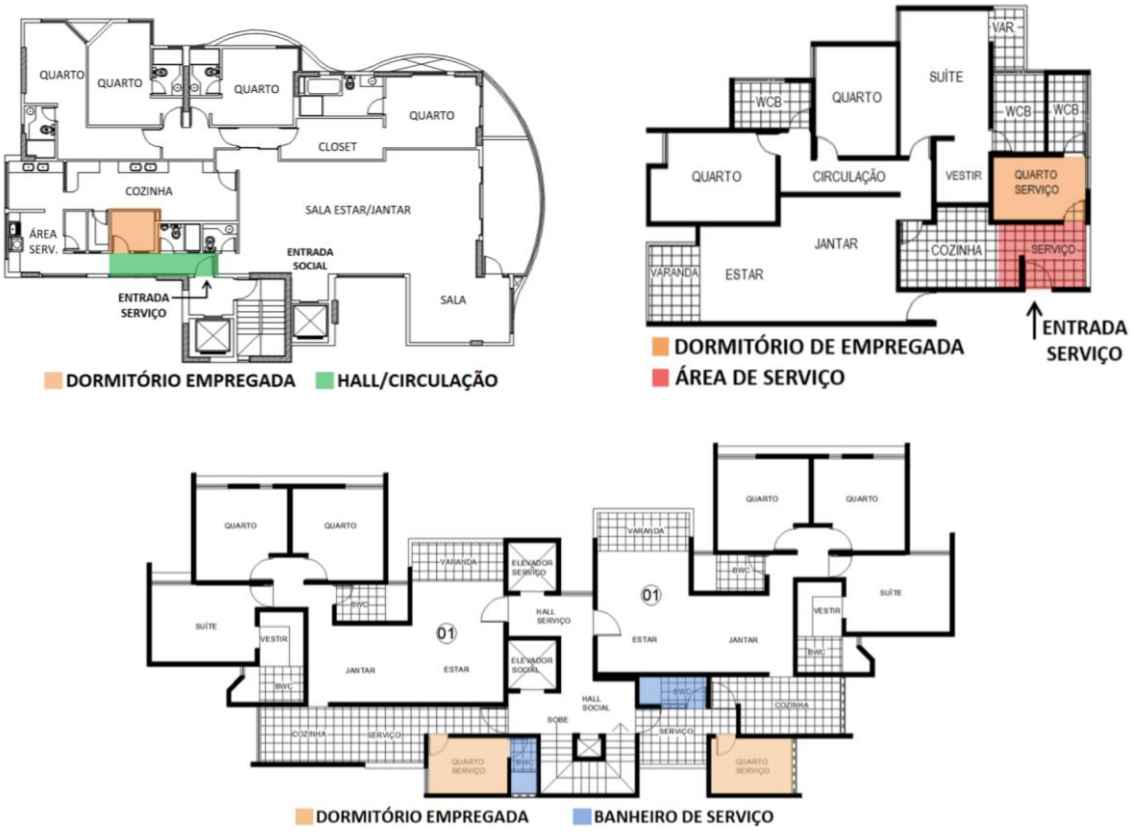
> Opção 1: voltar para o norte de Minas, sem 1 R$ no bolso, sem roupas, enterrando o sonho de ser independente, de fazer faculdade, de ajudar os pais e irmãos a sair daquela miséria.
>
> Opção 2: Aceitar as condições, e receber um salário mínimo
>
> Aceitei as condições por longo tempo. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [Option 1: return to the northern part of Minas, without even R$1 in my pocket, without clothes, burying my dream of being independent, of going to college, of helping my parents and siblings to get out of that misery.
>
> Option 2: Accept the conditions and receive minimum wage.
>
> I accepted the conditions for a long time.]

On the one hand, urban migration is constructed as a mythological narrative that often offers liberation and autonomy to those residing in rural areas. However, the vulnerability that is introduced through this migration—this sense of being 'out of place'—manufactures a desire for protection among these women, thus allowing their patrões to negotiate an authoritarian work relationship. In exchange for this alleged protection or stability, the patrões exercise additional paternalistic control over their empregadas, veiled as generosity in the face of such struggles and needs. As Moura et al. (2020) note, "this relation cannot be seen as something beneficial or a protection supplied by the patrões, considering that these relations are constantly seen as factors that impede the regulation of the salaries of domésticas" (p. 8). In other words, the ultimate goal of hiring displaced women is not to protect a vulnerable population, but to economically and emotionally exploit them.

Quartinho de empregada: spatial concessions in paternalistic agreements

Deeply intertwined with this geographic displacement of empregadas and the alleged benevolence of offering them employment is the proposition to live in the workplace. Perhaps the most emblematic space occupied by domestic workers is the 'quartinho de empregada', the space afforded to empregadas who live in the home of their patrões. In general, the typical quartinho de empregada is a small, windowless room located in the back of the home, oftentimes connected to the kitchen and with a separate external entrance, as exhibited in the sample floorplans pulled from buildings in the northeastern state of Alagoas in Figure 1. Several

Figure 1: Example apartment floorplans in the state of Alagoas (Lima & Toledo, 2020)



sources have noted the ways in which this is a product of the period of slavery in the country, citing how enslaved domestic and farm workers were forced to live on the enslavers' properties, in haphazard structures known as the senzala (slave quarters). As the activist Preta Rara (2020)

has garnered extensive fame for asserting, “a senzala moderna é o quartinho de empregada” [the modern slave quarters are the maid’s quarters]. This phenomenon—not only of hiring domestic workers, but also of having them live in cramped quarters in their workplace—is so deeply rooted in Brazilian commonsense that it has followed Brazilians outside of the country. Within the community of Brazilians living in Portugal, real estate developers have been known to construct a series of buildings specifically for Brazilian tenants by including quartos de empregada with these specifications (Amato, 2019).

Similar to the recruiting and hiring of displaced women, offering to house empregadas serves as yet another strategy to obscure the division between the personal and professional, which allows for the imposition of a familial sense of paternalism in the workplace. According to Teixeira et al. (2015), because of “the peculiarity of the job, also realized in the private space, the house become a productive sphere, makes it so that in their day-to-day, there is not an exact delimitation between what is private and what is public” (p. 162). These lines are further blurred when an empregada not only works in another individual’s private sphere, but also when that becomes her private space as well. Gestures such as gossip and storytelling between these two groups, or affection gained from participating in the child rearing process, reinforce this development of personal connections in the face of professional activities (Vieira de Paula Jordão, 2011). As one domestic worker explained, “Quando alguém, divide um espaço com vc em qualquer desse mundo e em qualquer situação…obrigatoriamente esta pessoa se torna intima e parte da sua família e não há como apartar de uma relação emocional também” [When anyone shares a space with you in anywhere in this world or in any situation…that person obligatorily becomes intimate and part of your family and there is no way to avoid an emotional relationship as well] (Preta Rara, 2019). However, this relationship of affective ambiguity not only fulfills the

emotional needs of these parties, but also serves as a pseudo-governing structure. The lack of legislation and difficulty to enforce existing legislation within the domestic sphere leaves the terms of the job up to the patrões' discretion, especially due to the difficulty empregadas face in collective organizing given the isolated nature of the industry (Vieira de Paula Jordão, 2011).

In fact, offering spatial concessions to empregadas within the home—in this case, the quartinho de empregada—serves as a justification to treat them less as employees and more as children, thus giving them the authority and sovereignty to determine 'what is best' for these women. For example, as one empregada described in *Eu, empregada doméstica*,

> Um belo dia, depois de 3 anos trabalhando para família com o mesmo salário, resolvi pedir um aumento. O que ouvi era que o que eu ganhava era muito, já que eu não pagava moradia e nem comida! Segundo ela, qualquer outro patrão descontaria do meu salário despesas, como luz, água e comida! Que eu não tinha o que reclamar! Fiquei nessa casa durante 6 anos! Pq nunca sai? Eu achava que ninguém me daria um emprego melhor! Ela me fez acreditar que sim, eu ganhava muito, e tinha comida e moradia de graça. Que eu deveria ser tratada dessa forma pq o meu lugar era no quartinho de empregada. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [One beautiful day, after 3 years working for a family with the same salary, I decided to ask for a raise. What I heard was that what I earned was a lot, since I didn't pay housing and not even food! According to her, any other patrão would discount my salary for expenses, such as electricity, water, and food! That I had no reason to complain! I stayed in that house for 6 years. What didn't I ever leave? I thought that no one would give me a better job! She made me believe that yes, I did earn a lot, and I had food and housing for

free. That I should be treated in this way because my place was in the quartinho de empregada.]

Several other testimonies affirmed this practice of using the quartinho de empregada (and the concomitant 'luxuries' that accompany this, such as water and electricity) to justify the refusal to compensate empregadas for their work. As one empregada remarked, "Se isso não é escravidão é o que?" [If that isn't slavery, what is?] (Preta Rara, 2019). This mentality perhaps best exemplifies the dialectic that Santos (1978) describes between past and present social relations and space. On the one hand, due to the deep historical connection between slavery and domestic work and the current subaltern status of these women, they are expected to (or provided with little to no alternatives other than to) live within their workplace, in a room few from the upper class would consider habitable. Thus, their socio-historical status is inscribed into the layout of these residences. At the same time, however, this spatial inscription then influences the treatment of these same subjects. Because they have a specially designated room in the home, they are exploited via wage theft. In other words, the use of space itself then impacts the social relations that play out in the domestic sphere.

In addition to using their own 'generosity' to justify the exploitation of empregadas, patrões often use the quartinho or the empregada's live-in status to perpetuate the discourse that they are 'part of the family', which serves to further erase the exploitation and cloak the paternalism they experience at the hands of patrões. Before returning to the case studies, it is critical to underscore the function of such discourses in upholding patrão authoritarian control over their empregadas. The refrain that 'ela é quase da família' [she is almost part of the family] is deeply engrained in Brazilian commonsense, having appeared in one form or another in nearly all of the case studies. Many scholars contend that this belief is at least partially derived from the

myth of racial democracy that has plagued Brazilian commonsense since at least the early 20th century, which purports that the particular conditions of slavery in Brazil created a harmonious coexisting of the races in the post-abolition period, often contrasted with the binary opposition and violent nature of racism in the United States and South Africa. In practice, however, this myth represents an erasure of the racism that is deeply engrained in Brazilian society and has been violently embodied by Afrodescendants for centuries. Critically, this erasure is often maintained by citing instances of superficial proximity or affective relations between individuals of different races (Pinho, 2015). In the same vein, this rhetorical erasure of the oppression of empregadas by affirming that they are part of the family often relies on the daily coexistence and, in many cases, cohabitation between patrões and empregadas. First of all, as Teixeira et al. (2015) note, equating empregadas with family is a method for accounting for the proximity that they share with these families in such a way to establish a sense of clientelism, cordiality, and patriarchy over them. Secondly, the notion of being 'quase da família' implies that the work being realized by empregadas is not actually work, thus meaning that the domestic space is not a professional or productive space (Ribeiro Corossacz, 2020). Consequently, the integration of empregadas into this familial space allows patrões to exempt themselves from the duties of the work relationship (Moura et al., 2020).

For example, in *Que horas ela volta?*, Val's intimacy with the family is not only underscored by the extensive time she spends with them as a live-in maid, but specifically through scenes that take place within her quartinho. When Fabinho cannot fall asleep, he treks across the home, down the back staircase connected to the kitchen, down to her room, where she fulfills a pseudo-maternal role, singing him to sleep and caressing his head. As such, when Val asks Bárbara if her daughter Jéssica is welcome to stay in the home while she prepares to take

the entrance exam for a university in São Paulo, Bárbara emphatically accepts and welcomes her daughter, stating, “Claro! […] Você é praticamente da família. Você me ajudou a cuidar do Fabinho.” [Of course! […] You’re basically family. You helped me take care of Fabinho.] (Muylaert, 2015, 19:20). Bárbara then offers to buy Jéssica a mattress to sleep on the ground of Val’s quartinho, in a gesture which Val responds to with immense gratitude. On the surface, the message Bárbara aims to send is that, just as Val have sacrificed for Fabinho, she will do the same for her Val’s daughter (Muylaert, 2015). In reality, however, this supposed gesture of generosity is an early signal of a series of actions that Bárbara takes in order to subjugate Jéssica to the same authoritarian rule that Val has grown accustomed to. Later in the film, it becomes clear that there is an open guest room in the house, yet Bárbara insisted on purchasing a mattress, so that Jéssica would sleep on the floor of the already cramped quartinho de empregada (Muylaert, 2015). As such, Bárbara is less interested in extending spatial inclusion to a supposedly pseudo-family member, and more so in ensuring that Jéssica knows her place in the home.

Surveillance and policing of the domestic sphere

Of course, in the midst of this purported reciprocally generous relationship, patrões must constantly reassert and reaffirm their power and sovereignty in order to ensure that the ambiguity that they perpetuate does not provide the same benefits to their empregadas. In other words, due to the previously described sense of familiarity and intimacy that has the potential to equalize power relations, this hierarchical dynamic is reinforced by a policing and surveillance of space that ensures the maintenance of this symbolic distance and separation. As Bragança et al. (2019) describe, “domestic workers, because they share an intimate familial space, receive the denomination of ‘as if she were part of the family’, but it is expected that they know ‘their

place'" (p. 117). In this sense, the generosity and affectivity that patrões share with their empregadas is conditioned on their complacency and commitment to their inferior status. As Ribeiro (2019) explains, "it's much easier to love Black people when they are in 'their proper place'" (p. 89). Because the reciprocal loyalty and trust that binds the patroa-empregada relationship exposes each to vulnerability at the hands of the other, patrões often exhibit suspicion and vigilance to guarantee that this reciprocity does not truly neutralize their differences nor their segregation.

Although spaces such as the quarto de empregada are 'conceded' to empregadas as if their own, patrões maintain sovereignty over this domestic territory by spying on empregadas in these spaces or searching their spaces. For instance, when Noemia, one of the empregadas in the film *Casa Grande*, finds a used condom in the trash, the patroa Sonia immediately rushes to the quartinho of their live-in maid, Rita, to search her belongings, a peculiar first reaction given that Sonia has a teenage son whose blossoming sexuality is the focus of the movie. Then, upon discovering photos of Rita taken throughout the home (one of which is a nude photo) hidden in her room, Sonia immediately terminates her (Barbosa, 2014). Notably, when doing so, Sonia references the intimacy and 'quase da familia' refrain to provoke a sense of guilt and shame in Rita, remarking that, "eu te tratei como uma filha desde que você chegou aqui. A gente foi construindo um elo, uma relação." [I treated you like a daughter since you arrived here. We were constructing a bond, a relationship] (Barbosa, 2014). The irony in this statement, of course, lies in the fact that Sonia's indignation is primarily born out of Rita's indiscriminate occupation of the household as depicted in the photos (which would not have been treated as offensive if it were a family member who did so) and that the child Sonia does have was never treated as a suspect following the discovery of the condom. Rita's retort to her untimely termination—"A

senhora também tá arrependida de ter mexido nas minhas coisas?" [Are you also sorry for having gone through my things?]—reminds the viewer that this "relationship" or "bond" is incongruent with such surveillance and intrusion in what was supposed to be a private space for Rita (Barbosa, 2014)

In fact, even material possessions within the home are policed through such acts of surveillance, as they come to symbolize the patrões' sovereignty over their domestic territory. For instance, in *Que horas ela volta?*, Val accidentally breaks one of the family's old serving trays while cleaning it and ends up storing it in a random drawer out of Bárbara's sight. Later in the film, when Bárbara's indignation with Jéssica's lack of respect for the domestic hierarchy reaches a breaking point, she pulls the tray out from a cabinet in the kitchen, asking Val how long it has been broken (Muylaert, 2015). Thus, it becomes evident that she was waiting for the opportune moment to unveil this discovery, using it as a token of shame to signal a disruption of the tacit reciprocal loyalty expected in these domestic relations. Indeed, Bárbara uses this opportunity to remind Val that, "pode não parecer, mas essa casa ainda é minha" [it may not seem like it, but this house is still mine] (Muylaert, 2015, 1:19:42). Hence, despite the quasi-familial relations the family has built with Val, this proximity does not supersede their concern for their superior status and control over the home. Likewise, the same sense of suspicion concerning encroachments on patrões' private space and possessions is exemplified in the comic strip shown in Figure 2. Firstly, just as Sonia invaded Rita's private space in the name of

Figure 2: Os Santos: Uma tira de ódio N. 5 – Face (Assis, 2019)

[Didi sure is fat! What a sin!
But she also doesn't take care of herself…]

[Can I even deal with Edilsa?
Thinking she's all that with that frizzy hair!]

[And that boyfriend of hers? I can't with that face. There's something about him. I don't know how to explain it…]

[He seems to be involved with bad things, you know?
He looks like a thug!]

[Now, that sister of Edilsa's is disgusting! Just because works in a bank!]

[Wow! Each one uglier than the other.]

[Are you and Edilsa friends on Facebook? God no! Would I ever trust her that much?]	[So then what are you digging for? You know my lapis-lazuli necklace, the one I love?]	[Well I lost it. I'm trying to see if I can find it.]

domestic security, this patroa's surveillance extends beyond the home and breaches her empregada's personal social media (Assis, 2019). Whereas empregadas are expected to navigate through a complex web of socio-spatial limitations, barriers, and enclaves, the patrões' hierarchical position concedes them the autonomy to police these spaces as if they were deterritorialized. Secondly, the comic ironizes the paradoxical sense of intimacy and suspicion that exists between these two groups. Despite the patroa employing Edilsa in her home (which presumably exposes her to intimate aspects of the family's life) and even being acquainted with Edilsa's family members, she is offended by the idea that she would trust her enough to be friends with her on Facebook (Assis, 2019). Such an attitude confirms the contention from Bragança et al. (2019) that, because empregadas' locus of work is the home—a space of intimacy among family members—they are placed in a position of close physical proximity and marked social distance.

In reality, however, patroas often do not wait to be 'taken advantage of' in this manner, but rather opt to put their empregadas to the test in order to determine to what extent they respect the hierarchy and, by extension, if they can be trusted in the private space. For instance, as the daughter of a former empregada described:

> Na época em que minha mãe trabalhou na casa dessa senhora, a mesma colocava uma grande quantidade de dinheiro, enrolado em vários lugares na casa como em baixo, do colchão, dentro da fronha do travesseiro de baixo do tapete dentro dos potes de doces na cozinha, no banheiro e outros diversos, lugares espalhados pela casa. Assim minha mãe limpava, e não retirava o dinheiro do lugar onde ela o encontrou. Apos fazer isso a

> senhora Dona Silva, como a minha mãe a chamava começava a se queixar, que estava sentido falta de Dinheiro, e que se fosse preciso, contrataria um investigador ou chamaria a policia. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [At the time that my mom worked in that woman's house, she would place a large quantity of money, rolled up in several places in the house, like underneath the mattress, in the pillowcase, underneath the rug, inside the jars of sweets in the kitchen, in the bathroom, and several other places spread throughout the house. So my mom would clean, and didn't take the money from any place where she found it. After doing that, Dona Silva, as my mom called her, started to complain that she was missing money and that, if necessary, she would hire an investigator or call the police.]

Several other testimonies from *Eu, empregada doméstica* confirm that hiding money in places commonly cleaned by empregadas is a common practice among patroas to test their loyalty. Similarly, other testimonies demonstrated that:

> Eu tinha um colega de trabalho que marcava com caneta o nível do galão de água mineral para saber se a empregada estava bebendo "da água dele". Ao perguntar qual água então a funcionária deveria beber, ele disse: — Da torneira, claro! Água mineral é só pros patrões. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [I had a colleague that would mark the gallon level of the mineral water with a pen to know if the empregada was drinking "his water". Upon asking which water his employee could drink, he said:—From the tap, of course! Mineral water is just for the patrões.]
>
> Uma de suas patroas lhe disse uma vez que era um privilégio pra ela trabalhar em sua casa, ganhando comida de graça e ainda recebendo um salario no final do mês. Nesta mesma casa os patrões entravam escondidos em casa quando estavam fora para espiar o

> que ela estava fazendo, na tentativa de dar algum flagra nela fazendo algo de errado. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [One of her patroas told her once that it was a privilege for her to work in her house, getting food for free and still receiving a salary at the end of the month. In this same house, the patrões would sneak into the home when they went out to spy on what she doing, hoping to catch her doing something wrong.]

The logic underlying these tactics is that, even when the empregada is alone and may gain some sense of autonomy in the private space, she is reminded of her subordination. In this sense, patrões aim to create an environment in which empregadas feel and recognize their omnipresence, in order to thus ascertain omnipotence over them.

This sense of suspicion and desperation for obedience takes its most extreme form in the ways in which patrões immobilize empregadas within the home: locking them in their quartinhos. Despite being largely absent from any fictional representation of empregadas, Preta Rara (2019) included several accounts of empregadas having been held under forced confinement in the patrões' absence in order to perpetuate their authoritarian dominance. For instance, as one former empregada describes:

> Naquele dia meus patrões tinham ido viajar e me deixaram trancada no quintal na casinha que eu dormia. Acordei e tinha sangue nas minhas pernas, logo comecei a gritar pedindo ajuda. Um vizinho subiu no muro e me viu e começou a me chamar de neguinha ladrona, perguntando o que eu estava fazendo lá. Eu disse que morava naquela casa. Ele me desmentiu, dizendo que já tinha ido varia vezes naquela casa e nunca tinha me visto. Foi quando expliquei que quando chegava visita me trancavam no quartinho e dizia pra não gritar se não iria me bater muito. Esse moço chamou o bombeiro e fui resgatada. Me

levaram até a casa da minha vó, que já estava em prantos sem saber do meu paradeiro. (Preta Rara, 2019)

[On that day, my patrões had gone on vacation and left me locked in the little house in the backyard where I slept. I woke up and had blood on my legs, so I started to scream for help. A neighbor climbed up on the fence and saw me and started to call me a [slur for a Black person who is considered a thief], asking what I was doing there. I told him I lived in that house. He accused me of lying, saying that he had already over to the house several times and had never seen me. It was then that I explained that when a guest arrived they would lock me in the quartinho and told me not to scream or else they would beat me. That man called the firefighters, and I was rescued. They took me to my grandma's house, who was already weeping from not knowing my whereabouts.]

Several other testimonies spoke to this practice of immobilizing them in their rooms (Preta Rara, 2019). Of course, this form of paternalism is profoundly more inhumane than the previously described tests of good faith; both, however, function to demarcate, enforce, and police boundaries in the midst of the manifold ambiguities within this seemingly deterritorialized zone.

Chapter III: Contempt for the manual laborer

Deeply intertwined with this hierarchical and authoritarian dynamic is a generalized contempt for manual labor and, by extension, manual laborers themselves, which confines them to an inferior position within Brazilian commonsense. Pinho (2015) notes how the colonial roots of the practice of having others do domestic work has contributed to the stigmatization and racialization of this form of manual labor. As such, the inability to conduct domestic chores and the concomitant dependence on domestic workers has come to represent a form of prestige and status in Brazilian society, a clear marker of class and racial distinction. This stigmatization has created an imaginary binary opposition. On the one hand, the domestic manual laborer is depicted as ignorant and uncivilized, inviting mockery and ridicule. This representation aims to buttress the conception of poor and/or Black people as existing outside of or in opposition to modernity. On the other hand, the middle and upper classes who employ these domestic workers are represented as tolerant, patient, and sympathetic in the face of such nonsense (Pinho 2015). As Pinho (2015) describes, "the patronizing portrayal of domestic workers as ignorant and their patrões as sympathetic function as unambiguous markers of rigid class boundaries" (p. 113). At the same time, however, this condescending sense of sympathy also functions to underpin the aforementioned myth of racial democracy, where "the nation's asymmetries are superseded by notions of comradeship and horizontalism" (Pinho, 2015, p. 113).

In this section, I will engage with these ideas to demonstrate the ways in which patrões signal their distance and difference from empregadas in order to underscore their inferior societal position. Beyond expanding upon Pinho's understanding of the ways in which Brazilian commonsense perpetuates a contempt for those who conduct the 'dirty' tasks in society, I would like to also bring this into dialogue with the concept of estraneidade (foreignness), as presented

by Bragança et al. (2019), which represents the myriad ways in which empregadas can be marked as foreigners within specific spaces, even those where their presence is not foreign at all. I will argue that the spatial strategies that buttress contemptuous attitudes towards empregadas often function to produce a sense of estraneidade, which subsequently treats them as constantly out of place. Firstly, I will argue that the imaginary 'origin places' of empregadas, such as the nordeste (the Northeastern region of the country) or the favela, serves as a key marker of foreignness and incivility, which reinforces the previously described paternalistic domination of them. Secondly, because of this presupposed foreignness and incivility, I will illustrate the visceral responses that the hegemonic classes exhibit when empregadas are able to independently occupy 'their' spaces. This will underscore the way in which these classes conceive of the spatial foreignness of empregadas as an immutable condition. Thirdly, I will highlight one of many techniques that patrões use to feel comfortable occupying the same spaces as empregadas: making them wear uniforms. I will show how the uniform indicates that the empregada is not occupying upper-class spaces independently and, rather, serves to reinforce the rigid class status of the patrões. Finally, I will illustrate how the domestic sphere becomes somewhat of an urban microcosm by erecting several segregated spaces to maintain physical and social distance between empregadas and patrões.

Minha terra: imagined spaces of origin of empregadas

The commonsense conception of empregadas as agents originating from spaces outside of modernity serves as one of the key markers of this class and racial binary, which treats this subaltern group as ignorant and comical in comparison to their sophisticated and tolerant employers. In addition to the previously practice of hiring women from the North or Northeastern region or the favelas, Brazilian media abounds with stigmatizing and stereotypical

portrayals of empregadas with relation to these spaces. According to Emery da Fonseca et al. (2012),

> It is not uncommon to associate the figure of these professionals to the image of the more disadvantaged classes and the habits that they possess. These figures are commonly related to Black women, imported from the Northeast into big metropolis settings, devoid of beauty or middle-age women—that are in the family for years. This oftentimes unconscious association has happened because of the repetition for years on end of these same stereotypes. (p. 5)

Specifically, regional and urban dialects often signal a lack of intelligence and education that serves as a basis for this mockery of empregadas (Pinho, 2015). For instance, in *Que horas ela volta?*, when Jéssica arrives from Pernambuco and introduces herself to the family, Fabinho snickers and remarks that, "ela fala que nem a Val quando chegou" [She talks just like Val when she got here] (Muylaert, 2015, 31:49). In addition to her accent serving as a sort of comedic relief, what truly stands out here is the implication that Val's accent has changed in such a way to not provoke the same type of laughter when she talks. When contextualized within the film's overarching plotline, this serves as one of a series of markers that brand Jéssica as an uncivilized outsider unable to appropriately navigate her way through the modern domestic world of São Paulo.

Despite the marginal conditioning that empregadas may undergo as they learn to adapt to environments outside of their hometowns, it is key to underscore that satirical and contemptuous portraits of empregadas imbue them with a set of inherent, unchanging qualities that justifies their immutable position in society. Preta Rara (2019) provides numerous accounts of women who left the Northeast, the North, or rural areas of their states to seek upward mobility by means

of education in the 'big city'. Although patrões often indicate that this is the intent of recruiting these empregadas (as previously described), they deploy several tactics to deny them this possibility and keep them in their place as manual laborers. One testimony, in particular, exemplifies this mentality:

> Em 2002 sai de uma cidade pequena do Interior do Paraná e fui morar em Curitiba/PR tendo um sonho de me formar em uma Universidade, comecei trabalhando como doméstica numa residência de Médicos (ele Psiquiatra ela Psicologa). [...] Em outra ocasião falei para ela que eu não poderia ficar até as 20:00 na casa dela que eu queria estudar e me formar nossa ela foi muito rude comigo e disse que eu tinha nascido para trabalhar em casa de família. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [In 2002 I left a small city in the interior of Paraná and I went to live in Curitiba/PR [the capital of the state] having the dream of graduating from a university, I began working as a doméstica in a home of doctors (he was a psychiatrist and she was a psychologist). […] In another occasion, I told her that I couldn't say until 8 PM in her house because I wanted to study and graduate she was really rude to me and said that I was born to work in the home.]

The proposition that, as a native of the interior (rural) region of her state, she was born to be an empregada indicates is notable for two key reasons. Firstly, this statement roots the identity of the manual laborer in specific geographic sites of origin. Secondly, it suggests a fixity in the notion of what constitutes a manual laborer; any possible changes in those who are allegedly destined to fulfill these duties are unacceptable because this destiny is assigned at birth.

Furthermore, the favelas serve as an imaginary geographic construction that justifies the attribution of inferior qualities to empregadas and, consequently, subjects them to their patrões'

dominance. In other words, as Pinho (2015) argues, the paternalistic view of these localities as uncivilized creates an expectation of childlike obedience of their residents. Figure 3, for

Figure 3: Confinada: Uma série em quadrinhos N. 14 – Amor à vida (Assis & Oliveira, 2020d)

[There are some people criticizing me and calling me names. Just because on my last story, in the background, my employee appears.
Guys, let's try to know about things before we talk about them?]

[Ju doesn't have family in Rio. And she preferred to quarantine here with me.
Better here than in the favela, right?
Those people don't respect the lockdown. Many leave their jobs to get emergency aid and go drink cachaça in the street!]

[How are things over there, Dinah?
Ah, Ju! Horrible, you know?
Lino was fired. Money has gotten tight.
We had to figure things out.]

[And then, we ended up exposing ourselves, you know?]

[You know how it is. Small house. A bunch of people.
We didn't feel anything. But my mother-in-law got bad. She had a lack of air.
And then it was the same old, same old. We couldn't get into a hospital.]

[It was all really fast.
And we don't even know if it was Covid.]

[We just know that it's poor people that are dying willy-nilly.
It's stray bullets, dengue, covid…
And we have to risk our lives working.]

[At least we are still going to have fun. Because everything could end in the blink of an eye for us.]

[Like, poor people don't have love for life, right?]

instance, depicts this patronizing attitude, as the patroa speaks for her empregada in order to justify having her live with her during the quarantine. Specifically, she proclaims that, "essa gente não respeita o confinamento. Muitos largam o emprego pra pegar o fundo emergencial e ir tomar cachaça na rua! [...] Ou seja, pobre não tem amor à vida, né?" [those people don't respect the lockdown. Many leave their jobs to get emergency aid and go drink cachaça in the street! […] Like, poor people don't have love for life, right?] (Assis & Oliveira, 2020d). The patroa expresses all of the stereotypes traditionally associated with black and/or poor subjects in Brazil: laziness, drunkenness, opportunism, and recklessness. In setting her home in opposition to the favela, she aims to characterize this former space with caring and tolerant qualities. As well, the patroa, as an occupant of this space, attributes superior intellect and emotional capacity to herself in comparison to those in the favela, thus giving her the authority over her presumedly obedient empregada. As Bragança et al. (2019) explain, the concept of foreignness extends even to those residents of the same urban space, as empregadas are made to feel out of place in these spaces and are not conceded the same liberty to manage their own mobility through them.

Empregadas in Disneyland: adverse reactions to perceived upward mobility

The contempt that patrões and other members of the upper class hold for manual laborers becomes perhaps most visible when these individuals traverse spaces that are seen in diametric opposition with the spaces in which empregadas reside or from which they originate. In other words, instances in which empregadas are able to shed away their 'foreignness' provokes notably classist responses from patrões. Perhaps one of the most contentious spaces for an empregada to inhabit are institutions of higher education. As Teixeira et al. (2015) explain, in addition to manual labor being historically constructed as an inferior profession in Brazil, it has been positioned in opposition to academic professions that are tied to the realm of 'thought'. In other words, the imaginary construction of the manual and the mental as opposites led to the former receiving a "status of indignity" (Teixeira et al., 2015, p. 164). Perhaps most emblematic of the classed and racialized nature of this thought versus work dynamic is the debate around the country's affirmative action policies. Beginning in the early 2000s, certain universities, such as the State University of Rio de Janeiro (Uerj) and the University of Brasília (UnB) began to adopt racial quotas for incoming students. Over time, the quota system expanded throughout the country, encompassing other universities as well as other social criteria (such as family income), until 2012, when a law was passed installing quotas in all public universities for the next 10 years. Despite the transformative reduction in homogeneity in university classrooms because of these policies, the proposition that a sacred space such as higher education could now be penetrated by lower class and Black bodies was deeply disturbing for the hegemonic classes that had traditionally controlled these spheres (Ribeiro, 2017). As Ribeiro (2017) explains, the reactionary refrain that "Black people are going to steal my spot" indicates how these individuals view public universities as belonging to them by birthright (p. 45). In sum, the proposition of

fluid social mobility as evidenced by freer spatial occupation is deeply unsettling because of this contempt for Black and poor bodies.

Throughout *Eu, empregada doméstica*, the desire to receive a university education was commonly expressed, yet was often accompanied by patrões' efforts to thwart such possibilities or to psychologically abuse empregadas to the point of capitulation (Preta Rara, 2019). However, nowhere is this discomfort with manual laborers gaining access to higher education more salient than in *Que horas ela volta?*. For instance, when Jéssica tells Bárbara, Carlos, and Fabinho of her interest in taking the college entrance exam for a university in São Paulo, they all react with shock and apprehension (Muylaert, 2015). Historically, empregada's daughters are expected to accompany their mothers to work, learn how to conduct the litany of domestic tasks required of them, and (in most cases) work for free in the household while learning. According to Moura et al. (2020), patroas see being an empregada as a "hereditary condition", thus making it impossible for them to imagine these women in any other profession and robbing them of their subjectivity (p. 11). As such, the idea that an empregada's daughter would be seeking upward mobility was perceived like an oxymoron. In fact, Edna (one of the other empregadas) later complains about Jéssica not helping her mother with her work, implying that her studies and preparation for the entrance exam should be of secondary priority to the domestic duties of the house. Inevitably, when Jéssica passes the entrance exam and Fabinho does not, Bárbara's warning to Val to not get too excited because the subsequent exams will be harder than the first subtlety reinforces her belief that an empregada's daughter could not possibly be competent enough to get into a prestigious university (nor score better than her own son) (Muylaert, 2015).

Similarly, the cartoon strip pictured in Figure 4 highlights this same indignation in

Figure 4: Confinada: Uma série em quadrinhos N. 38 – Passado 3 (Assis & Oliveira, 2020a)

[Fran!!
Daiane!! It's been so long.]

[Getting in from New York?
Yep. I was studying. Film.]

[Wow! Awesome!
Six months of a lot of hard work!
But it was really cool.]

[So then are you going to be a filmmaker?
Ah! I don't know if it's my thing. I'm going to think about it. But I have time. I'm young.]

[What about you?
Do you work in the airport?
No. I'm a law student, you know?
There was a conference in New York. And I got a scholarship.]

[It was three days that changed my life.
I bet! Going to New York is magical.
Yeah. There was that too…]

[Sweetie!
Mommy!]

[How I missed you!
Did you have a good trip?

[It's getting worse every day.
It looks like a bus station.]

The flight was good. But this
airport…]

response to an empregada's ability to access higher education, but also the additional spaces that are available to her as a result. The assumption that Daiane worked in the airport underscores the ways in which estraneidade marks certain bodies as having specific purposes and access to specific forms of mobilities within the same spaces; whereas Fran naturally is traveling back from the illustrious Big Apple, Daiane is denied this same possibility of international travel (despite having luggage in hand when she sees Fran). Subsequently, Fran expresses disappointment and disgust with the collapsing class status conceded by airports, comparing it to a bus station (Assis & Oliveira, 2020a). Notably, this alludes to a real statement made by TV presenter and actress Ticiane Pinheiro, who posted a picture of the line at an airport with the caption, "Olha a fila para passar no detector de metais! Aeroporto virou rodoviária" [Look at the line to go through the metal detector! The airport has become the bus station] on her Instagram story in 2019 ("Lilian Aragão", 2019). These statements, of course, illustrate not only the ways in which spaces such as airports are meant to be narrowly accessible, but also the ways in which the 'invasion of foreigners' into these spaces is extremely visible and subtly policed.

This fetishization of international travel, in particular, is deeply engrained in notions of class in modern day Brazil, as it remains one of the hallmark spaces that the Brazilian working class is precluded from accessing (except the occasional empregada who is brought along to attend to the children on vacation). For instance, in 2020, the Minister of the Economy Paulo Guedes gave a speech concerning the exchange rates and valorization of the US dollar and the Brazilian real. At one point, he affirmed that a more highly valued dollar would not necessarily be a bad thing, considering that, when the real was previously more highly valued, "empregada doméstica [estava] indo para a Disneylândia" [domestic workers were going to Disneyland], a

situation which he described as a “festa danada” [one hell of a party] (Caram, 2020). His statements reveal a couple of key points concerning Brazilian contempt for the working class. Firstly, he was notably attempting to rhetorically use a hyperbole to express the dire economic perversion the country once experienced—the “festa danada” that once was. The fact that the two extremes that he brought together in order to provoke revulsion from the audience were empregadas and Disney affirms both the contempt held for this particular group of workers and the imaginary prestige of an international destination such as the United States. Secondly, the claim that a highly valued dollar would be positive for the country indicates his belief that the subjugation of empregadas (and the working class in general) to specific spaces within the national territory is beneficial to the country as a whole.

O uniforme de empregada: traversing hegemonic spaces as an empregada

Despite these visceral reactions to the occupation of upper-class spaces by individuals predestined to be manual laborers, the nature of hired domestic labor necessitates the coexistence and cohabitation of these two groups. In order to continue to mark and police the estraneidade of empregadas when occupying the intimate spaces of their patrões, a series of practices has been developed in order to continue to distinguish these workers as uncivilized upon entering these spheres of modernity. Specifically, the maid’s uniform continues to be one of the most salient of these practices. The image of the empregada is inextricably linked to the uniforms that they are often expected to don and that abound in popular depictions of these workers. As Moura et al. (2020) argue, the uniform serves to capture an empregada’s subjectivity, given that the patrões’ desire to outwardly parade their ability to outsource domestic work requires that the individuality of the empregada be denied. I contend that this stripping of empregadas’ subjectivity contributes to the broader project of ‘foreignizing’ empregadas in spaces that they regularly occupy (or, in

some cases, even reside in). The uniform is just one of a wide range of practices that exist in a dialectical relationship with this process of estraneidade. That is to say, class and racial relations within these spaces are born out of practices such as differentiated clothing, at the same time that these relations necessitate the perpetuation of such practices.

Considering the optical salience of the uniform, it often serves as a racial and class marker, especially in cases of ambiguity where empregadas occupy relatively homogenously upper-class spaces (such as the case of Daiane and Fran from above). For instance, as one empregada from *Eu, empregada doméstica* recounted:

> No aniversário da criança, a mãe pediu para que eu fosse para a festa, pra que eu cuidasse da criança lá, a patroa disse que seria necessário eu ir pois teria que ficar cuidando da criança durante a festa (a festa seria na minha folga, mas aceitei numa boa, pois pagariam o dia). Perguntei se poderia ir com uma roupa mais apresentável, porque aquele uniforme não ficaria legal na ocasião. Ela não permitiu, disse que teria que ir de uniforme, pois os garçons poderiam me confundir como convidada da festa. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [On the child's birthday, the mother asked me to go to the party, so I could take care of the child there, the patroa said that it would be necessary for me to go since she would have to spend the party watching the child (the party was on my day off, but I agreed to it, since they would pay me for the day). I asked if I could come in a more presentable outfit, because that uniform would not look good for the occasion. She did not permit it, she said that I would have to come in uniform, since the waiters could confuse me with a party guest.]

This interaction holds several notable insights. Firstly, the patroa markedly justifies her response by claiming that the wait staff may confuse the empregada with a guest of the party. Though

subtle, this suggests that the other guests of the party would have no trouble identifying her as a class outsider, with or without a uniform. In other words, it indicates a belief that members of the working class have limited class consciousness and a comparative inability to perceive the subtle art of pertaining to the upper class. Of course, this not only reinforces the previously described notion that working class individuals lack the education and sophistication exemplified by their employers, but also that, in the eyes of the upper class, the uniform itself does not confer an inferior status upon these women. Rather, it serves as a marker or reminder of the innate and immutable characteristics that confer this status upon them. Secondly, the description of the uniform as being not "presentable" enough for the occasion underscores the desire to degrade manual workers. As Moura et al. (2020) affirm, the uniform comprises a broader system of humiliation that targets these women. Once again, this humiliation arises from the impetus to mark these workers as foreigners in spaces in which class and racial homogeneity cannot be fully enforced.

In fact, a recent social media faux pas clearly illustrates this interplay between the estraneidade and humiliation that constitutes the uniforme de empregada. In June of 2020, a famous fitness blogger named Juju Norremose posted a video on her Instagram in which she celebrates the return of her empregada in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. She, a white woman, and another white man are dressed in fitness clothing and dance to music, while the empregada—a Black woman dressed in all white—is cleaning a chair and the ground. At a certain point, the empregada joins them in dancing, whipping her cleaning rag around in the air to celebrate with them. Norremose inevitably deleted the post due to intense criticism, which focused predominantly on three main issues ("Blogueira fitness", 2020). Firstly, social media users noted the elitist undertones to the post, considering the need to celebrate Norremose's

‘liberation’ from having to do the manual labor for which the upper class holds such contempt. Secondly, in the caption that accompanied the post, she described her family as “nearly complete” now that her empregada had returned, once again remitting to the previously described ‘quase da família’ mentality. And finally, users called out the “estética escravocrata” [slave-like aesthetic] of the video, considering not only the racial dynamics at play, but also the fact that the empregada is dressed in her all-white uniform (“Blogueira fitness”, 2020). This optical differentiation reinforces the class boundaries within the house, thus calling into question this notion of the empregada being ‘quase da família’. Rather, the uniform clearly marks her as being from outsider in this family and aims to remind Norremose’s followers of her ability to pay for domestic labor.

Furthermore, just as I described in the previous section, patrões and other members of the upper class express adverse reactions when empregadas fail to conform to this dress code when occupying their spaces. Preta Rara (2019) presented a series of testimonies from woman who had been forced to wear the uniform, especially in the rare instance that they were confused for a resident of the patrões’ building. Similarly, in *Que horas ela volta?*, when Val decides to go out with some friends, she changes out of her typical ‘uniform’ of old, used, light colored clothes for a bright outfit. Markedly, both Fabinho and Bárbara are shocked by her appearance, remarking “Onde você vai tão arrumada assim?” [Where are you going all dressed up like that?] and “Eita, tá cheirosa hein? Nossa senhora” [Wow, you smell really nice, huh? Oh my god], respectively (Muylaert, 2015, 13:44 – 14:01). Seeing her in the home, dressed much like Bárbara herself would likely dress when going out with friends, both members of the family are shocked. In addition to underscoring the previously described power of aesthetics in navigating these spaces, it also reinforces the perceived inseparability between manual laborers and manual work. The

idea that Val may have plans, friends, a life outside of work, or commitments outside of the home leaves Fabinho and Bárbara both astonished and slightly humored. Their reactions reinforce Moura et al.'s (2020) argument that links the uniform to the extinguishing of the empregada's subjectivity. It is critical to acknowledge, however, that the uniform is not an omnipresent marker of foreignness in patroa-empregada relations. Rather, this discussion highlights the subtle, but notable ways in which relations of belonging are constructed within certain realms. In other words, the uniform represents just one of a series of markers that reassure patrões of their superior societal position, despite their cohabitation and coexistence with these manual laborers.

Segregation of the domestic sphere

The domestic workplace is comprised of a complex maze of these markers that aim to put distance between patrões and their empregadas, to maintain clear class distinctions, and to ensure both empregadas and the general public recognize them as outsiders. In fact, these markers often begin even prior to the empregada entering the patrões' homes. For instance, portões (portão in the singular), gates that are commonly erected in front of homes and apartments as a means of security in Brazil, highlight the division between the 'street' and the 'home'. As Pinho (2015) notes, this street versus home dynamic often represents the imaginary division between the poor and the rich, the white and black, and the patrão and empregada. Of course, for agents such as empregadas which traverse both of these zones, the portão serves as a reminder of their status as belonging to the street, and not the home. For instance, in *Casa Grande*, the scenes of intimacy with the family's empregados are often contrasted by the repetition of the same scene every morning: Noemia, one of the family's diaristas, buzzing in at the portão in order to be let in every morning (Barbosa, 2014). The contraposition of these scenes serves as a reminder that,

despite the extensive access the empregadas have within the family's domestic sphere, they still are outsiders who do not have entirely free control over how they traverse this space. More explicitly, one empregada's child from *Eu, empregada doméstica* recounted the following:

> Minha mãe trabalhava como diarista, duas vezes por semana, numa casa de uma família de classe média. Certo dia, às 8h00 da manhã, como de costume, minha mãe estava chegando em seu local de trabalho quando, após apertar a campainha, foi abordada por um assaltante que levou sua bolsa e seu celular que estava no bolso da calça. Isso não seria estranho se não fosse pelo fato de o seu patrão estar do lado de dentro do portão, ouvindo toda a ação sem prestar socorro e só saiu quando o assaltante havia ido embora. Como se não bastasse, quando minha mãe entrou em sua casa em choque e chorando, seu patrão olhou para ela e disse "Ah, mas você tava usando bolsa, né? Faxineira tem que usar sacola de faxineira." (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [My mom worked as a diarista, twice a week, in the home of a middle-class family. One day, at 8 in the morning, as usual, my mom was arriving at her workplace when, after ringing the bell, she was approached by an assailant who stole her purse and her cell phone that was in her pants pocket. That wouldn't have been odd if it weren't for the fact that her patrão was inside the portão, hearing all of the action without offering help and only came out when the assailant had left. As if that were not enough, when my mom entered the house in shock and crying, her patrão looked at her and said, "Ah, but you were carrying a purse, right? Faxineira should carry a grocery tote bag."]

This intentionally delayed reaction underscores two main insights concerning the contempt that the upper class has for manual laborers. Firstly, it reinforces the desire to maintain physical distance and division between the scourge of the 'street' and the peace of the 'home'. The patroa

would not risk the safety that her upper-class status concedes her to attempt to rescue her empregada, and she only permits her entrance when the threats of poverty have passed. Secondly, much in the same way that the uniform aims to mark empregadas as foreigners, the patroa claims that the empregada's failure to conform to optical classist practices made her a target in the upper-class neighborhood.

Similarly, upon entering the residence (specifically, apartment buildings), empregadas are subject to yet another optical form of spatial differentiation that marks them as foreigners. Oftentimes, apartment complexes and other buildings have two main sets of elevators, known as the elevador social and the elevador de serviço. Whereas the former is meant for the residents of the building, the latter is to be used by the service staff. As one empregada plainly recounted in *Eu, empregada doméstica*, "Lembro de duas situações que eu presenciei quando fui fazer faxina com ela: a primeira foi não poder usar o elevador social, só podíamos usar o de serviço porque a patroa dizia que era pra não sujar" [I remember two situations that I witnessed when I went to clean with her: the first was not being able to use the elevador social, we could only use the elevador de serviço because the patroa said that it wasn't meant to get dirty] (Preta Rara, 2019). In this sense, similar to the stereotypes discussed in the "Minha terra" section, the class and racial caricaturization of manual laborers serves as the basis and justification for segregating them, even in a space as transitory and mundane as an elevator. Beyond this, however, the high level of internal visibility associated with the elevator means that the optical separation of empregadas reaffirms the residents' class status, both by creating distance between these groups and also by advertising the presence of hired domestic help in the building. As one empregada recounted in *Eu, empregada doméstica* after having used the elevador social instead of the one specifically designated for her:

> [a patroa] me olhou da cabeça aos pés e disse: “ tem o elevador de serviços, só use ele”. Eu respondi: entrei no que o porteiro me encaminhou, me acompanhou até o social, entrei. Ela entao diz o que sempre ouvia das patroas: vc não parece pobre, por isso o porteiro te abriu a porta do elevador social, avisa que vc é diarista. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [[The patroa] looked me up and down and said “there is an elevador de serviços, just use that one.” I responded: I entered in the one that the doorman directed me to, he walked me to the social one, and I entered. She then said what I always heard from patroas: you don’t look poor, that’s why the doorman opened the elevador social for you, let him know that you’re a diarista.]

In this sense, the elevador de serviço represents an attempt to preserve rigid class boundaries. As I described in the two previous sections, these spaces are meant to enforce and police class, racial, and gendered identities as immutable conditions. Despite the fact that this particular empregada “doesn’t look poor”, she must still be relegated to the segregated spaces. Here, the segregated mentality that I previously highlighted in the context of the geographical and urban distribution of Brazil comes to operate in the microcosmic domestic world. Whereas the previous described visceral rhetoric emerged in response to empregadas going to Disney or occupying the airport, it now manifests itself within the patroa’s building. Thus, regardless of the scale, upper-class, white spaces cannot be constituted as such without the existence of an ‘other’. I will continue to unpack this idea by engaging with the concept of domestic peripheries in the next chapter.

Chapter IV: Dehumanization of the Black body

In order to relegate these laborers to an inferior status in the ways described in the previous chapter, their bodies must be dehumanized to maintain these strict class and racial

divisions and to justify the exploitation of this allegedly inferior class. As Pinho (2015) notes, Brazilian commonsense paradoxically treats the body of the empregada as both infrahuman—a dirty and disposable object that exhibits a minimal degree of humanity—and superhuman—a endless source of labor that supersedes the capabilities of humanity. As an infrahuman agent, the empregada represents a polluting agent, considering she vacillates between the 'home' and the 'street', which symbolize purity and danger, respectively. Beyond this, the nature of the work itself, often characterized as hard and dirty chores, reinforces this vision of the body as polluted and rough. In this way, members of the upper class reaffirm their class status because they are "disembodied from the dirt of their own bodily functions" (Pinho, 2015, p. 119). On the other hand, as a superhuman agent, the empregada is believed to be capable of endless and uninterrupted labor. Pinho (2015) notes that this notion emerged as part of a series of "oppositional and complementary representations of black and white women" from colonial Brazil, which idealized "physical fragility and idleness" in the latter group. One of the key examples she cites is the fact that families that hire empregadas rarely purchase household appliances that would facilitate their tasks or, if they do own them, do not permit empregadas to use them; rather, those appliances exist for when empregadas are not there.

Whether infrahuman or superhuman, the body of the empregada is stripped of its humanity, which of course represents an extension of the previously described process of robbing these women of their subjectivity. As Vieira de Paulo Jordão (2011) affirms, the dehumanization of the Black body and the working-class body remits to the period of Abolition, during which time the continued confinement of Black women to the realm of domestic labor was justified by portrayals of these women as "extremely primitive, barbaric, and promiscuous, deprived, therefore, of any right to citizenship" (Rago, 1997, p. 582). In this section, I would like

to continue to engage with this idea of citizenship, which illustrates how the spatial deconstruction of empregadas' humanity and objectification of the body of the empregada continue to deprive these individuals of citizenship. Firstly, I will demonstrate how the spatial imaginary of the favela is constructed as a source of impurity, whose residents thus hold the potential of contaminating upper-class, white spaces. This thus allows for a pathologizing of these residents that precludes them from being seen as deserving of the same rights as their patrões. Secondly, I will illustrate how this pathologizing of the body of the empregada then contributes to a 'peripherization' of the domestic sphere, as patrões create invisible barriers to maintain the purported purity of their homes. These first two points underscore the infra-human attributes that are spatially attributed to empregadas. In the third and final section, I will highlight the notable lack of barriers throughout this same space as it relates to the professional activities of empregadas. In this sense, the 'deterritorialized' nature of the domestic space reinforces the perceived supra-human qualities of their bodies, treated as machines and endless sources of productivity.

The favela as a space of impurity, contamination, and infection

As illustrated in previous chapters, the places of origin or residence typically associated with manual laborers have served as a basis for patrões to justify their exercise of paternalistic power over their empregadas and mark them as foreigners in shared spaces. In order to complete this panorama, it is critical to illustrate how the favela is constructed as a source of impurity, which thus justifies the exclusion of empregadas from an imaginary citizenship within spaces in which they coexist with their patrões. For instance, as evidenced in Figure 5, the spatial

Figure 5: Confinada: Uma série em quadrinhos N. 36 – Passado 1 (Assis & Oliveira, 2020b)

[Do you remember Daiane, Fran?]

[Madalena's daughter?
She's going to spend the day here today.
Do something with her.

[Wanna go to the beach?
I didn't bring a bikini.
I'll lend you one.
What's up Fran!
Hey, Edu! Diego!
This is my empregada's daughter.]

[Do you know how to catch waves?
Yes!
I know how to catch waves right!
Do you want to go then?
You shouldn't have lent her your board, Fran.
Black people don't know how to deal with the ocean.]

[Lookie there! Better than you!
HAHAHAHA
You're going to be knocked down by the wave!
Didn't I say? A monkey's place is in the forest!]

[Idiot!
Are you crazy?]

[Don't get upset. You're black, but you're actually pretty.]

[Sorry about the board.
Don't worry about it. I'll buy another.
She wore your bikini?
How gross!]

[She lives in the favela.
Imagine the filth!
The amount of bacteria!
Eww!]

imaginary of the favela attributes a series of subhuman qualities to the empregada's daughter, which thus justify her social exclusion and the hegemonic class' affective detachment. Firstly, when Fran's friend yells out that "lugar de macaca é na floresta" [a monkey's place is in the forest] (Assis & Oliveira, 2020b), he not only declares that Madalena's daughter lacks the humanity that the rest of his white companions enjoy, but he ties this to a spatial reference: the forest. That is to say, if the 'mar' [ocean] (symbolizing the upper-class neighborhood) reinforces the fragility and idleness traditionally characterizing the white body, the 'floresta' [forest] (representing the working-class favela) highlights the savage and uncivilized nature of the Black body in this hegemonic imaginary. In attributing these animalistic qualities to Madalena's daughter, the boy aims to build a case for denying her citizenship outside of the floresta. Secondly, Fran's subsequent conversation with a friend after the incident at the beach underscores the fear associated with extending inclusion to these purportedly polluted bodies. Because Madalena's job requires that she and her daughter traverse these two diametrically

opposed zones, their bodies come to represent sites of contamination. Rather than putting the imaginary purity of the upper-class settlement at risk, Fran throws the bikini away.

In fact, beyond just conceiving of the empregada as a dirty figure, Brazilian commonsense fixates in particular on the pathology of the bodies that occupy marginalized zones. For instance, as one empregada recounted in *Eu, empregada doméstica*:

> Sempre tive costume de uma vez ao ano fazer exames de HIV no posto de saúde que fica na região da Corifeu de Azevedo Marques… Sempre entrava as 6 AM. E no dia do exame pedi para entrar depois do almoço pois o percurso é longo. Minha patroa perguntou o porquê e eu disse que era para fazer exame de AIDS/HIV. E tive que ouvir um "Favelada sai dando para todo mundo tem que até fazer exame pra ver se tem alguma doença, são tantos…" (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [I always made it a routine to take an HIV test once a year in the health post that is in the Corifeu de Azevedo Marques region…I always got there at 6 AM. And on the day of the test I asked to go into work after lunch since the route was long. My patroa asked why and I told her it was to take the AIDS/HIV test. And I had to hear a "Women in the favela go around putting out for everyone they have to take a test to see if they have some disease, they do it with so many…"]

Similarly, Assis and Oliveira take up this spatial pathologizing of the body of the empregada in Figure 6. In both instances, the favela is treated as a breeding ground for disease, whether

Figure 6: Confinada: Uma série em quadrinhos N. 14 – Costelinha (Assis & Oliveira, 2020c)

[So, auntie. Mom told me. How scary!
I know, my love.]

[And we were being so careful in quarantine.
It was just one day. Gil's birthday. He wanted to have Bené's *costelinha com tutu* (Brazilian dish).]

[We had a lunch. Camila and her husband came. Just them!
Is it possible one of them gave it to my uncle?
No! They were doing quarantine right.]

[They didn't have anything. It wasn't them.
But I know who it was: Bené.
She was in quarantine with us.
But her daughter was evicted, and Bené went to help the girl move into her house.
You know what the favela is like.
Everyone crowded together.]

[She brought covid to us.
And it was all so fast.
In a few days, Gil went to the hospital. I thought it wasn't going to make it.]

[12 days in the ICU.
Of course, we didn't spare any \ expense on the treatment.
Two weeks later he got better. Thank God!
Bené didn't have the same luck.]

[Your coffee, Ms. Lucia.
Never bring the cup by hand!
It's not elegant.
Use a little tray, ok?]

[New empregada. I have to teach her everything! So annoying.
Hahaha I know how it is.]

[But thank God the worst is over, right auntie?
Now life goes on.]

because of the structural conditions (such the crowded nature of the housing) or the purported behavioral shortcomings of the residents (such as promiscuity). Assis' and Oliveira's (2020c) comic strip, in particular, underscores how Bené is excluded from the same citizenship as her patrões. Firstly, by portraying Bené as the infectious agent, the family is able to absolve themselves of the guilt of having caused the suffering of one of their own and the death of their empregada. Thus, the treatment of the body of the empregada not only as a site of impurity, but of contamination exempts the patrões from extending the same rights, privileges, and protections to their empregada that they extend to their own family member. In fact, this transfer of guilt thus enables the reaction depicted at the end, wherein the most unfortunate part of the situation is having the burden of having to train a new empregada. Secondly, this comic strip highlights the dialectical manner in which the favela is constructed as an infectious space. In the same manner that the favela is discursively represented as the origin of disease, the consequences of those diseases must be relegated to the favela—or rather, the bodies that occupy the favela. In this sense, in Brazilian commonsense, Bené's death (resulting not only from the negligence of her

patrões, but also the structural conditions in Brazil) serves to naturalize the vision of favelas as disease-infested zones.

The domestic workplace as a labyrinth of barriers

Deeply intertwined with this spatial imaginary of the favela are the spatial practices that are enforced within patrões' residences in an alleged attempt to sequester the threat of infection and contamination that these bodies represent, which in reality serves to deny empregadas their own sense of humanity. As Bragança et al. (2019) explain,

> For as much as the empregada is seen as that Other, inferior and that boosts the risk of contamination, she is still necessary for the services of the upkeep of the home (also seen as inferior) to be carried out. Because of this a compulsory proximity is established […] within a domestic/intimate space, in which physical and symbolic barriers and borders are erected that regulate the relation with the Other. The home turned into this space that holds peripheric zones that demarcate the tensions stemming from the relations between patroa and empregada, from the delimited areas of circulation, exclusion, and belonging of these agents, to the example of what occurs in the occidental megalopolis.

In particular, I want to focus on this principle that they propose of the creation of peripheric zones within the domestic space in order to delimit specific forms of circulation, exclusion, and belonging. Such a conception of spatial relations within the home helps to underscore the intimate relationship between the dehumanization of the body and the denial of citizenship; much in the same manner that peripheric zones (such as the favela) are secluded from the rights and privileges afforded residents of mainstream areas, empregadas are expected to live as second-class citizens in their own workplaces. As I described earlier, the domestic sphere once again becomes a microcosm of uneven geographic and urban distributions in Brazil as a whole.

First of all, due to the pathologizing of the Black and poor body, one of the key spaces of exclusion and differentiation are those deeply entangled with bodily functions: the kitchen, the dining room, and the bathroom. These spaces are particularly provocative when thinking about domestic work because, at the same time that they represent the primary spaces where empregadas are required to concentrate their labor, the premise that empregadas themselves would need to occupy these spaces for personal use is deeply unsettling for patrões. As such, they erect a series of peripheric zones that allow them to maintain imaginary and physical distance between their bodily functions and those of their empregadas. The most common of these practices that I found in Preta Rara (2019) include: buying a separate set of kitchenware for empregadas to use for their own cooking and consumption; requiring empregadas to bring their own kitchenware; building a separate bathroom of much lower quality for empregadas; and requiring empregadas to eat only after the family has finished eating, normally at the smaller table in the kitchen (rather than the dining room). However, a couple of testimonies in particular underscore the relation between these rules and the infrahuman vision of the body of the empregada:

> Um dia, ela viu que a empregada tinha usado o lavabo e pediu para que eu falasse para ela lavar com agua sanitária pois ela queria usar depois. Eu me recusei, ela me deu o maior sermão porque “essas moças tem um monte de doenças” (mas tudo bem “essas moças” cuidarem dos netos dela e fazerem comida… vai entender!). Eu me recusei, ela não conseguiu ir ao banheiro do andar de cima a tempo e eu fiquei como a vilã da história. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [One day, she saw that the empregada had used the toilet and asked me to tell her to wash it with sanitary water since she wanted to use it afterwards. I refused, she gave me the

biggest sermon because “those girls have a bunch of diseases” (but no worries that “those girls” take care of her grandchildren and make food…go figure!). I refused, she couldn’t get to the upstairs bathroom in time and I became the villain of the story.]

Na hora de almoçar, a empregada perguntou o que poderia servir de almoço pra eles [um grupo de empregados], e minha avó respondeu: “Essa gente come qualquer coisa!”. Quando eles terminaram o serviço e foram embora, ela pediu pra empregada lavar todas as maçanetas das portas que eles tinham pegado. Fora o fato de que a empregada só podia comer na cozinha e usar o quarto e banheiro dos fundos, que ficavam fora da casa, no quintal. (Preta Rara, 2019)

[At lunchtime, the empregada asked what could be served for lunch to them [a group of empregados], and my grandma responded: “Those people eat anything!”. When they finished the service and left, she asked the empregada to wash all of the doorknobs that they had touched. Besides the fact that the empregada could only eat in the kitchen and use the bedroom and bathroom in the back, that were outside the house, in the backyard.]

Similar to the comic strip depicting the two girls going surfing, these testimonies highlight a key insight about the function of the peripherization of the home. The disposing of the bikini, the washing of the toilet, and the cleaning of the doorknobs all aim to discursively erase traces of the empregada in the home, apart from her professional duties.

Similarly, *Que horas ela volta?* provides innumerous examples of these invisible barriers that maintain the supposed purity of the hegemonic class and confine empregadas to marginal zones. In fact, the main plotline of the film depicts somewhat of a spatial battle between the ‘well-conditioned’ Val and her ‘rebellious’ daughter, who seeks to assert her rights to navigate the home just as any other citizen of the domestic microcosm. For instance, the morning after

Jéssica arrives, Val oversleeps and thus is not able to prepare breakfast for the family. Jéssica, unaware of these practices, sits at the table in the kitchen and serves herself some food, while Bárbara stands at the sink watching her with disdain (Muylaert, 2015). The role reversal—the patroa standing in the kitchen waiting for the empregada's daughter to finish eating—creates a palpable sense of tension in the scene, until Val arrives and Bárbara makes a passive aggressive comment about Jéssica enjoying the jam. Val immediately reprimands her daughter, explaining the rule to her and exclaiming, "Onde que já se viu? Filha de empregada sentada na mesa dos patrões" [Where have you seen this before? The empregada's daughter seated the patrões' table] (Muylaert, 2015, 42:45). Later on, after further spatial incursions by the empregada's daughter, including studying in the guest room and eating lunch in the dining room with Carlos, Bárbara enters the kitchen while Jéssica is eating 'Fabinho's ice cream', straight from the pint and makes a comment about how his ice cream never seems to last. In reality, this is a reference to the lunch she had with Carlos, at which point he requests that Val serve Jéssica not the cheap ice cream reserved for empregadas, but rather the special ice cream that Fabinho enjoys, explaining that "tudo aqui é nosso, da Jéssica" [everything here is ours, Jessica's] (Muylaert, 2015, 52:48). Ironically, Jéssica's continued lax attitude in the kitchen prompts Bárbara to have a serious conversation with Val, in which they have the following exchange:

> "Então enquanto ela estiver aqui, queria te pedir para prestar atenção para deixar ela da porta da cozinha para lá, tá bom?"
>
> "Sim senhora, da porta da cozinha para cá, não é?"
>
> "Isso, da porta da cozinha para lá." (Muylaert, 2015, 1:20:12 – 1:20:24)
>
> [So as long as she is here, I wanted to ask you to pay attention to make sure she stays from the kitchen door to there, okay?

Yes ma'am, from the kitchen door to over here, right?

Exactly, from the kitchen door to over there.]

Notably in this exchange, they use the spatial demonstratives for "here" and "there", despite being side by side in the scene—they are, of course, not speaking of their momentary locations, but rather the lugar de empregada and lugar de patroa. This exchange exemplifies the way in which the domestic sphere becomes an urban microcosm in which patrões enforce peripheric zones to reinforce their own purity and exclude empregadas from enjoying the privileges of living in such a space could offer.

Furthermore, the film epitomizes the connection between these invisible peripheric demarcations and the dehumanization of the body of the empregada, using one of the most sacred domestic spaces in Brazilian commonsense: the pool. In addition to being a symbol of wealth, idleness, and leisure, pools once again represent the possible threat of contamination. For instance, the family's pool in *Que horas ela volta?* comes to serve as the film's clearest 'off limits' zone for Val and, by extension, Jéssica. In the opening scene of the film, Fabinho (at the time a young child) plays in the pool and asks Val to come swim with him. In response, she laughs and tells him that she did not bring her swimsuit (Muylaert, 2015). Of course, for viewers familiar with Brazilian culture, it is clear that she is amused by his childlike naivety, which has left Fabinho totally unaware of the unspoken rule concerning pools. In fact, this is later confirmed when Val helps verse Jéssica in the litany of rules dictating how she may use the home; she tells her that, if they invite her to swim, she should respond by saying that she forgot her swimsuit, in a clear reference to the opening scene. Nonetheless, while the adults are inside the home, Fabinho and his friend insist that Jéssica come swim with them to the point of pulling her into the water with them. Once in the water, she continues to play with them, creating so

much noise that Val, Carlos, and Bárbara all take notice—and immediately demand that Fabinho stop and that Jéssica get out. At the end of the scene, Bárbara calls the pool maintenance company to have it drained. Later, while Jéssica and Fabinho are having a conversation alone by the pool at night, he tells her, "minha mãe disse que viu um rato aqui. Sei lá, é perigoso, né? A gente pode pegar doença" [my mom said she saw a rat here. I don't know, it's dangerous, you know? We could catch a disease] (Muylaert, 2015, 1:15:46 – 1:15:51). Thus, while much of the film can be understood as Bárbara's struggle to maintain the same paternalistic authority over Jéssica that she has over Val, the pool conflict highlights how this power struggle is deeply embedded in the desire to maintain supposed hegemonic purity while intermingling these classes.

Markedly, this comparison between Jéssica and a rat is part of a broader hegemonic strategy, in which the empregada is spatially dehumanized and marginalized by equating her with non-human agents. In addition to the rat comparison, the film *Que horas ela volta?* is rife with shots of Val occupying the same space as the family's dog. Whether in the kitchen or in her quartinho, she is often pictured alongside the dog, notably more frequently than anyone in the family itself (Muylaert, 2015). Similarly, in several testimonies from *Eu, empregada doméstica*, women spoke of how their patrões aimed to achieve their spatial dehumanization by confining them to spaces with animals (Preta Rara, 2019). For instance, as three different women recounted:

> Minha mãe veio de Minas para São Paulo, muito jovem, e achou empregos como empregada doméstica, em um caso, a patroa a apresentou a casa e disse que ela não devia usar o mesmo banheiro que os moradores, disse que devia usar um banheiro imundo onde uma cadela ficava trancada de dia. Um dia minha mãe estava passando roupas e precisou

usar o banheiro, então foi ao banheiro dos moradores, pois não desejava usar junto à cadela, ao sair, se deparou com a filhinha da patroa esperando atrás da porta, segurando uma garrafa de produto de limpeza para jogar no banheiro. Minha mãe perguntou o que a menina estava fazendo e a menina só respondeu que a mãe dela não gostava que minha mãe usasse aquele banheiro. (Preta Rara, 2019)

[My mom came from Minas to Sao Paulo, really young, and found jobs as a domestic work, in one case, the patroa showed her the house and said that she shouldn't use the same bathroom as the residents, said that she should use the dirty bathroom where a female dog was locked up during the day. One day my mom was ironing clothes and needed to use the bathroom, then she went to the residents' bathroom, since she didn't want to use one along with the dog, upon leaving, she came across the patroa's daughter waiting behind the door, holding a bottle of cleaning product to use in the bathroom. My mom asked what the girl was doing and the girl just responded that her mom didn't like my mom using that bathroom.]

Minha sogra Vanda tinha de 17 para 18 anos (isso foi mais ou menos em 1967/1968) quando arrumou emprego em uma casa em santo amaro próx. ao laboratório que fabricava a Novalgina. Logo no primeiro dia depois do almoço a patroa foi lá na cozinha e disse a ela para almoçar. Ela pegou um prato pôs comida e começou a comer, a patroa voltou e quando viu aquilo fez o maior escândalo dizendo que ela não poderia comer no prato dos patrões, pegou o prato da mão dela e pegou um outro prato debaixo da pia (todo mofado, velho e sujo) e jogou a comida lá, não satisfeita falou que ela não poderia comer ali, levou o prato lá pra fora até uma mesinha de cimento e disse que ela tinha que comer lá. Detalhe ela tinha muitos cachorros que ficaram lá ao redor da mesa. (Preta Rara, 2019)

[My mother-in-law Vanda was 17 or 18 years old (that was in 1967/1968 more or less) when she found a job in a house in santo amaro near the laboratory that produced Novalgina [medicine]. On the first day after lunch the patroa went into the kitchen and told her to eat lunch. She grabbed a plate placed some food and began to eat, the patroa turned around and when she saw that she made the biggest scandal saying that she could not eat on the patrões' plate, grabbed the plate from her hand and grabbed another place under the sink (all moldy, old, and dirty) and threw food on there, still not satisfied she said that she could not eat there, took her plate outside to a little cement table and said that she had to eat there. Small detail: she had a lot of dogs that stayed there all around the table.]

Eu era obrigada a dormir em uma casinha de madeira ao lado da casinha do cachorro, no qual ela [a patroa] jogava o resto de comida no meu prato no chão igual o do cachorro. Foram momentos muitos ruins, as crianças me chutavam, me mordiam, me batiam tudo dando risada e a moça [a patroa] falava que lugar de preto era assim porque preto não era gente. (Preta Rara, 2019)

[I was forced to sleep in a tiny wooden house next to the dog house, in which she [the patroa] threw the uneaten food on my plate on the food just like the dog. They were really horrible moments, the children kicked me, bit me, hit me while laughing and the girl [the patroa] said that the negro's place was like that because negros were not people.]

Each of these accounts reveals the ways in which the kitchen, the bathroom, and the quartinho de empregada are separate not only to maintain the supposed purity of the patrão-dominated spaces, but also to reinforce the underlying motivation to dehumanize empregadas through this separation. For instance, the first testimony underscores the absurdity in the fact that the patroa

refuses to use the same bathroom as her empregada, but the empregada is expected to use a bathroom alongside a dog. This degrading double standard, of course, goes unnoticed by the patroa, who sees her empregada as being hygienically and corporally equivalent to the canine. The same argument can be made for the latter two accounts. In fact, the third testimony expresses it most explicitly, as the patroa affirms that "lugar de preto era assim porque preta não era gente" [the negro's place was like that because negros were not people] (Preta Rara, 2019). Thus, by linking Black and poor bodies to subhuman markers, patrões aim to justify their failure to extend rights, inclusion, and citizenship to their empregadas.

Frictionless and deterritorialized: the geographies of domestic duties

However, this is not to say that the home is a stagnant series of topographical fragments that empregadas must carefully navigate. Rather, the home becomes a rigid maze as previously described when the empregada must use it for personal reasons. For professional reasons—that is to say, for the utility of the patrões—the home is generally an undifferentiated, frictionless plane of work. As Pinho (2015) underscores, the dehumanization of the body of the empregada involves imbuing it with both suprahuman and infrahuman characteristics. Whereas the aforementioned divisions aim to treat the empregada body as subhuman by pathologizing it and likening it to that of an animal, this section will explore the ways in which that same body is treated as a suprahuman force and an endless source of labor. I will focus predominantly on two spatial techniques which buttress this strategy: the lack of spatial differentiation in the tasks they are responsible for and the dominant focus on empregada entry into the home (and the subsequent insignificance of their exit from the home).

Although empregadas are often expected to use a separate restroom, eat with a separate set of kitchenware, and sleep in a room disconnected from or hidden within the home, this same

level of spatial hypersensitivity does not extend to their duties. Despite the sometimes-differentiated titles they may receive (such as babá, faxineira, cuidadora, etc.), empregadas are often responsible for all chores associated with maintaining the home. In fact, these titles often serve as a starting point. For instance, as one empregada recounted, "o trabalho que era apenas olhar as crianças, virou tomar conta da casa inteira. O valor continuava x" [the job that was just watching the children turned into looking after the entire house. The payment continued being x] (Preta Rara, 2019). Although the job of "tomar conta da casa inteira" [looking after the entire house] consists of tens of different tasks, including doing laundry, ironing, washing dishes, cleaning the kitchen, cleaning the bathrooms, vacuuming, and preparing meals, the house comes to symbolize a singular task or job. In doing so, patrões are able to exploit empregadas by demanding a level of work that fails to correspond with the amount they pay them and by hiring as few empregadas as possible to maintain a clean and orderly home. Similarly, in the film *Casa Grande*, following Rita's termination, her colleague Noemia ends up quitting because of the arduous nature of the job. She cites the fact that, despite firing Rita, the family failed to replace her with another empregada (because "é muito difícil achar alguém para que a gente confie" [it's really difficult to find someone that we trust]), thus expecting Noemia to perform twice the amount of work (Barbosa, 2014). On top of it all, Noemia explains how she has gone three months without receiving any payment, reinforcing how this 'creep' of tasks contributes to the exploitation of empregadas. Moreover, in *Eu, empregada doméstica*, one empregada's daughter recounted that, "Sempre que viam minha mãe sentada, nem que por um minuto de descanso depois das tarefas, já mandavam ela fazer outra coisa. Não importava o que, ela só não podia estar sentada" [Every time that my mom was seen sitting, not even for a minute of rest after her tasks, they ordered her to go do something else. It didn't matter what, she just couldn't be seated]

(Preta Rara, 2019). This testimony, in particular, reinforces the argument that policing of the domestic space arises as soon as the empregada begins to use it for her own personal reasons. As soon as she wants to sit to rest her body (or, in other cases, sit to eat, use the restroom, or sleep), she no longer has free mobility throughout the space as she does when she is working. In this way, patrões conceive of the body of the empregada as a tireless machine.

Additionally, throughout several of the case studies, the act of entering the home was of extreme importance, as partially described before, in comparison to the negligence paid to the question of exiting the home. For instance, in the film *Casa Grande*, Noemia, who does not live in the home as Rita does, is shown every morning being let into the home (Barbosa, 2014). Although the fact that she must be let in every morning indicates that she must also leave every day, this is not explicitly shown until the moment she quits. However, even then, it is unclear what time she was expected or allowed to leave prior to her resignation. More explicitly, several testimonies from *Eu, empregada doméstica* affirmed the comparative disregard for empregadas' ability to exit the domestic space. For instance, two empregadas recounted that:

> Além dos afazeres domésticos era de minha obrigação: dar banho nos cachorros, leva- los na rua, lavar o carro e durante os jantares e festas da família servir a todos os convidados! Meu horário era de 06:00 até as 18:00, muitas vezes se estendendo! As festas não tinham hora pra terminar! (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [Beyond the domestic chores, I was obligated to: give baths to the dogs, walk them in the street, wash the car and during dinners and family parties serve all of the guests! My schedule was from 6 AM to 6 PM, a lot of times going over! The parties didn't have an end time.]

> Os abusos eram diversos, eu tinha que descarregar todas as compras pra madame, eu tinha ficar aguardando até ela chegar pra que eu pudesse ir embora pra casa, tinha horário de entrar mas não de sair. (Preta Rara, 2019)
>
> [There were several abuses, I had to unload all of the groceries for the madame, I had to wait for her to arrive home so I could leave the house, there was a time to arrive but not to leave.]

Whereas the first testimony underscores the previously described limitless nature to the tasks expected of empregadas, both accounts affirm the lack of a defined time at which their shifts end. Just as spatial divisions within the home are only erected when the empregada wants to use the space for herself, the act of traversing between the 'street' and 'home' is prioritized when done in the name of the patrões' needs (and downplayed when it implies that the empregada may have her own life to attend to.)

Of course, as mentioned earlier, there are empregadas who do not leave their patrões' residence on a daily basis because they live in the home. This extreme case of 'entry, but no exit' illustrates how the quartinho de empregada serves to buttress this strategy of depriving empregadas of just compensation and working hours. Figure 7 exemplifies this dynamic.

Figure 7: Uma série em quadrinhos N. 8 – Thor (Assis, 2020)

[Title of chat: Didi's daughters [So absurd! The dudes came in [Yes! He got home a little after.

Girls, everything okay there?
Now it is. But it was tense. Mom's blood pressure went up and everything. But now it's normal.
I saw it on the TV. Son of a bitch! A big shooting …]

shooting. You don't even want to know. It was at the exit of the school! A worker headed home.
Don't I know it? The turmoil going on and where is Diego? Not getting home.
Wow! So much trouble. But is everything okay?]

He had gone from school to a friend's house.
He was scared when he got home. But everything's okay.
Wow. That's good.
Edilsa, be grateful to God that you don't have children! It's tough bringing children into this world.]

[Pardon me, Edilsa. You're sleeping, aren't you? I just need to grab alcohol.]

[Thor vomited on the rub in my room. Poor thing. He did some. damage.]

[But you don't need to get up. Just let me clean it up.]

[Girls, I'm going to bed. Love you.]

[Didi would never let me clean the floor. She would have jumped out of bed then and there! Edilsa just laid, there, as it if had nothing to do with her!]

[Empregadas like Didi don't exist anymore.
No they don't!
They think they're too good for the job. They're all uppity.]

In addition to reaffirming the previous function of the quartinho de empregada to distance empregadas from their families and social connections to create further dependence on the patrões, the patroa's criticism of Edilsa indicates that she should never be 'off the clock'. Even despite the patroa's certainty that Edilsa is sleeping, she nonetheless enters into the room,

explains the issue, and then expected her to offer her services (Assis, 2020). Beyond the quartinho de empregada blurring the lines between the empregada's time for herself and time dedicated to her job, this comic strip also highlights a subtle strategy that Pinho (2015) references: putting the cleaning supplies in the quartinho. In doing so, the separation between an empregada's personal and professional life is further obscured.

Chapter V: Final considerations

Therefore, I sustain that the three components of Brazilian commonsense delineated by Pinho (2015) are constructed, perpetuated, and negotiated spatially. Firstly, I have shown how patrões employ or benefit from a variety of spatial practices to displace empregadas from social and familial networks, in order to then exert more control over them as a paternalistic, authoritarian force. Secondly, I have illustrated that patrões perpetuate a series of spatial imaginaries that relegate empregadas and their profession to an inferior status with the aim of marking these individuals as foreign in hegemonic spaces. Finally, I have underscored how, in both discourse and practice, patrões spatially dehumanize the body of the empregada, treating it as a site of contamination and infection while also expecting it to exhibit superhuman stamina. In addition to confirming Pinho's (2015) findings, my analysis underscores the intimate ties between these exercises of hegemonic power and the spaces in which they are discursively formed and practices. Bringing the dialectics of geography into dialogue with Pinho's (2015) work serves to reinforce the ways in which spaces are constituted by both discourse and practice. However, the particular case studies I chose to analyze are unique in that they are centered on understanding these experiences from the point of view of empregadas. These case studies represent a paradigm change in Brazilian commonsense, as empregadas are shifting from being background figures, subordinated to their patrões, to being the protagonists—and even the narrators—of their own stories.

Specifically, I would like to designate this as a changing *lugar de fala*. According to Ribeiro (2017), lugar de fala [place of speech] represents a concept similar to feminist standpoint theory, in the sense that lugar de fala symbolizes the social place from which an individual speaks, is permitted to speak, is given authority to speak, is silenced, or constructs narratives.

She broadens this definition, however, in affirming that, "speaking is not restricted to the act of emitting words, but of being able to exist. We think of lugar de fala as a way of refuting traditional historiography and the hierarchization of knowledge resulting from social hierarchy" (Ribeiro, 2017, p. 36). In this sense, the concept of lugar de fala aims to put an end to discursive authoritarianism—it challenges the proposition that only the subaltern speaks from their social locations, forcing those in the hegemonic norm to question how their social hierarchies constitute these social places from which the subaltern speaks and exists. With regard to my work here, all of the case studies aim to break with this normative discursive model based on hegemonic lugares de fala by narrating the stories from another lugar de fala—that of the empregada figure. It is precisely this shift in lugar de fala that highlights the productions of space that I have outlined throughout this work. By elevating these voices and perspectives, the case studies effectively denaturalize spaces that were once taken for granted. Rather than representing these spaces as absolute and immutable, the case studies challenge hegemonic audiences to see space as relational and constructed and to acknowledge their role in the production of this space.

Most importantly, however, this shifting lugar de fala illustrates how the resistance to this oppressive commonsense also expresses itself spatially. In *Que horas ela volta?*, for instance, Val ends up playing in the pool—penetrating the patrões' sacred space—at the end of the film, prior to quitting her job to move in with her daughter and grandson (Muylaert, 2015). In *Casa Grande*, Noemia quits her job after Rita's termination because of the intense strain the job is having on her (Barbosa, 2014). *Eu, empregada doméstica* abounds with spatial forms of resistance, including ignoring tests of good faith, reclaiming autonomy while the patrões are not home, and quitting as a rejection of certain forms of treatment (Preta Rara, 2019). It would be well beyond the scope of this work to detail all of the ways in which empregadas reclaim space

and deny the authoritarianism, contempt, and dehumanization of their patrões. As such, I would like to suggest that future work continue to explore and unpack these spatial forms of resistance. Specifically, I would recommend applying the concept of quilombismo, as developed by Beatriz Nascimento (1979, 1985) and Abdias do Nascimento (1980), to these forms of resistance. Based on the historical formation of communities of self-liberated, formerly enslaved Afro-descendants known as quilombos, this analytic aims to describe forms of Afro existence outside of colonial and racist structures. The inherently spatial nature of this analytic would have immense explanatory power when applied to the ways in which empregadas subvert and liberate themselves from the colonial and oppressive conditions they face in the workplace. If Preta Rara (2019) contends that the modern-day slave's quarters are the maid's quarters, the question remains as to how the modern-day quilombos these workers have formed will progress and threaten or transform hegemonic spaces.

Glossary

Because of the difficulty in fully translating the range of terms involving domestic work from Brazilian Portuguese into English, I decided to leave a specific set of these terms in Portuguese throughout the essay. For ease of reading, reference the following definitions:

Empregada (doméstica): this is the main term I will use to refer to domestic workers. I will simply use *empregada*, though the full phrase is *empregada doméstica*, so some sources may use this or may simply say *doméstica*. Because of the gendered nature of the job, I will primarily refer to the feminine *empregada*; however, in certain cases where there is a mix of male and female domestic workers, I will use *empregados*.

Patrão, patroa, patrões, patroas: this refers to the individuals who employ empregadas. *Patrão* refers to a singular male boss, *patroa* refers to a singular female boss, *patrões* is the plural form and can be gender mixed (i.e., can refer to a husband and wife who employ an empregada), and *patroas* is the plural form referring only to women (i.e., several patroas).

Quarto/quartinho de empregada: this refers to the maid's quarters (i.e., the room within a patrão residence reserved specifically for a live-in maid). I will describe this more in detail at a later point, but I want to emphasize that, generally, the words *quarto* and *quartinho* are used relatively interchangeably in this context. *Quartinho*, which uses the Portuguese diminutive of '-inho' emphasizes the tiny nature of the room.

Elevador social, elevador de serviço: these are the two main types of elevators in many residences in Brazil. I will describe this more in detail at a later point, but I just wanted to highlight that the *elevador social* is meant for residences of the building, while *elevador de serviço* is meant for empregadas and other service staff.

Favela: a low-income informal settlement outside or within Brazilian cities

Faxineira: a more specific term referring to empregadas, with a focus on the cleaning that she carries out (i.e., similar to ‘cleaning lady’)

Diarista: another specific term referring to empregadas. In this case, it could be literally translated as ‘day laborer’, meaning the individual is hired for a day of work. They may come once or twice a week to a home, but the contract operates on more of a ‘one off’ basis, rather than paying a salary at the end of the month.

Babá: another term referring to empregadas. In this case, it refers to empregadas hired to take care of the children (i.e., more of a nanny figure).

Cuidadora: another term referring to empregadas. In this case, it refers to empregadas hired to take care of older individuals or adults who are unable to fully take care of themselves (i.e., a caretaker).

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